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CASE (THE)



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Wenham

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*This is the last case of a
judicial execution for a
murder in England.*

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THE
CASE
OF THE
Hertfordshire
WITCHCRAFT
CONSIDER'D.

Being an
Examination of a BOOK,
ENTITL'D,
*A Full and Impartial Account of the
Discovery of Sorcery & Witchcraft,
Practis'd by JANE WENHAM
of Walkern, upon the Bodies of
Anne Thorne, Anne Street, &c.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN PEMBERTON, at the
Back and Sun against St. Dunstan's Church
in Fleetstreet. MDCCXII.

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To the Honourable

Sir JOHN POWELL, *K^t.*

*One of Her MAJESTY's Justices
of the Queen's-Bench.*

S I R ,

AFTER I had resolved with my self upon the Publishing these Papers, I soon determined, that there was no-body to whom I could so properly send them as to Your Self. The Part You had in this Cause as *Judge* ; The Part You were made to bear by the Insolence of those, who not satisfied with Your Conduct in this Matter, endeavour'd to possess the World with an Opinion, that Your Unwillingness to come into their Measures, proceeded rather from a Disbelief of the Power

D E D I C A T I O N.

of *Invisible Beings*, than from any Deficiency in the *Evidence* of this particular Case, seem to give You more than a Common Interest in every Thing that has a Tendency towards clearing up the Darkness, in which Things of this Nature are involved.

There has been nothing, *Sir*, more invidiously urged against You, than the Freedom with which You used the *Clergymen*, who were concerned in the Tryal ; and the *Common-Prayer*, which was made to be an Evidence on the same Side. I am not so unconcerned for the Credit of those *Gentlemen*, the Dignity of their *Order*, or for the Excellent *Offices* of our *Church*, as to compliment You at the Expence of any of them. But when I consider what unreasonable Influence the *Opinions* of these Persons, and the *Reverence* for the *Prayers* of the *Church* had upon the Minds of the *Jury*, and consequently upon the *Life* that was at stake ; it sufficiently justifies to me, Your endeavouring to lessen the *Authority* of both, in a Case where neither could pretend to any.

I was

DEDICATION.

I was secretly concerned to observe, how easily Men are led into fond and ill-grounded Notions, and how fast the superstitious Fears of ignorant Men began to revive upon this Occasion: And believing my self able to offer something which might help to rectify these *Mistakes*, I thought I could not better employ a few vacant Hours than to this Purpose. I have endeavoured, *Sir*, to do Justice to Your *Judgment*; and I do not despair, but that whoever reads over the Whole, fairly, and without Prejudice, will be so far from charging You with too much *Remisness*, that, on the other hand, he will find sufficient Reason to admire Your great *Caution* and *Tenderness*, which would not permit You to give up, even a *wretched Life*, to the importunate Fears and Apprehensions of the *Country*.

I dare not, *Sir*, presume to claim to my self, any Merit from this mean *Performance*; nor think that I have contributed any thing towards the maintaining Your *Credit* among those, who are proper Judges of
of

DEDICATION.

of what is truly Valuable. Your Integrity and Wisdom ; Your profound Skill in the Laws of our Kingdom, and Your steady Zeal for our *Church*, are, I am sensible, so well establish'd amongst those who have the Honour to know You, that they stand in no need of so weak a Support as this. All that I can hope for, is, to cool a little the *Ferment* that has been raised upon this Occasion, and to give You some small Assurance that

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient and

humble Servant.

THE PREFACE.

Although it is no uncommon thing to appear in Publick without Ceremony, yet the Nature of this Performace is such, that I cannot but be sensible how great occasion there is for an Apology.

There are several Sorts of Men, who it is likely will expect that I should render some account of the Reasons, which induced me to enter upon this Subject. The First are those who have a very mean Opinion of this Story of Witchcraft ; these perhaps will be apt to think that I had little to do my self, and that I imagined others to have as little, that I could descend so low as to examine a Case, which is so apparently Ridiculous, as to be beneath the Thoughts of any, but Ignorant and Superstitious Men. Now with relation to these I must beg leave to reply.

First, That this Story is not so apparently Ridiculous as may be imagined. Some of the Occurrences therein mentioned are undoubtedly true : Others, tho' perhaps false, do yet carry with them a great Shew of Credibility ; and as to those Consequences which have been drawn from them, although indeed they do not

come

come up to what has been pretended, yet there are several things in these Accounts seemingly so strange and wonderful, as makes them in my Judgment, not wholly undeserving the consideration of a Wise Man.

It is certain, that how frivolous soever these things may appear in the Eyes of those who see them at a distance, they have yet been far otherwise esteem'd of by those who are nearer to the Scene of their Transaction ; insomuch that they have been a standing Topick of Discourse, not only amongst the Ignorant and Illiterate, but even amongst the wiser and more refined sort of People, in that Corner, almost ever since the Day wherein they happened. And indeed, when not only the Credit of a Man of a considerable Station and Character in the World, seemed hereby to be struck at, but also the Life of, perhaps, an innocent Person was in imminent danger, it is methinks a thing very excusable in any one to take these Matters into sober and serious Consideration.

But whatever becomes of this particular Story of Jane Wenham, it will, I conceive, be thought a matter of no small concern, to know in general, what are the true and distinguishing Characters of a Witch, and what Proofs are sufficient to support a Charge of Witchcraft against any one when brought to a Legal Tryal. And this, I hope, may afford me a Second Plea, to urge in defence of my Publishing these Papers. For although I do not pretend to have brought this Point to a full and positive Determination, (this being not my business at this time) yet I flatter my self thus far, that the Reader may find several Observations here, which may not be altogether useless to those who would think rightly of these Matters ; and that those whose

Chance

Chance it may be to be concerned as Jury-men in such Cases as these, may see, how hard (I had almost said impossible) it is to convict a Witch ; and thereby be diminished, how cautious and circumspect they ought to be, lest at any time they should incur the Guilt of condemning innocent Blood.

If these rude Strokes which I have drawn may be an Encouragement to those who have greater Abilities to handle this Subject with more Exactness, I presume it would be an Attempt not wholly unserviceable. For it is a very melancholly thing to consider, what odd Notions the generality of Mankind have concerning things of this Nature ; and with how little Judgment they discharge themselves when they are called to give their Verdicts concerning them. Age, Poverty, and a Perverse Temper of Mind, are the three principal Ingredients which enter into the Composition of a Modern Witch. One under these Circumstances fills the whole Parish where she lives with a thousand extravagant Fancies and terrifying Dreams. If any ones Cattle happen to dye (as they call it) strangely ; if any one chances to be sick of some uncommon Distemper ; in a Word, if any thing falls out which they cannot give a good account of, presently there is Witchcraft in the Case, and they are for hanging or burning the poor Wretch who has the misfortune to be suspected. This shows, I think, how necessary it is, as well, that People should be better informed, as that they ought never to be encouraged in these Extravagancies ; for it is hard to say where the Mischief will end, if this Humour be once indulged. and how many will daily be apprehended and brought to Tryal, upon suspicion of Sorcery.

As to those who are determined with themselves to consider all things of this Kind, as mere Figments, or Impostures, they doubtless will esteem it as an Argument of great Weakness and Credulity in me, that I could think it worth my while, to take such pains in examining the particular Instance before me. If these therefore should expect an Apology, all that I shall say is, that it would be an Argument of far greater weakness in me to attempt to convince them of such things as they are resolved never to beleive. Neither indeed is it my business to shew the Reality of the Existence of Evil Spirits, and of their Intercourse with Mankind; and therefore if there be any who desire to be satisfy'd herein, I shall referr them to those who have professedly treated upon this Subject.

But there are yet another sort of Men to whom I think my self obliged to say a Word or Two; and they are those who look upon the Being of Witches of such Concernment in Religion, that whatsoever has any tendency to destroy the belief of that, must of necessity weaken the other. The Notion which these Men go upon seems to be this. That the Existence as well of Spirits in general, as of Evil Spirits in particular, being of such Importance to be believed, and Witchcraft being as they suppose so evident and sensible a Demonstration of both, it seems that any Attempts made against the Latter, is endeavouring to rob Religion of one considerable Guard which should secure it against the Attempts of prophane and licentious Men.

Mr. Glanville.

This they will tell us is one of the Out-works of our Faith, and that when once a Breach is made here, Religion will lose ground apace, and Atheism come on by larger

larger Strides : *That* when once Men come to deny there are SPIRITS, or WITCHES, it is a fair Step and Introduction to say, THERE IS NO GOD.

Whether this be a just way of Reasoning, I shall not undertake to determine ; tho' I must needs say, that since Religion stands upon a far more Solid and Lasting Foundation, it looks a little preposterous, to see Men insisting upon this, with so much Heat and Eagerness. And therefore, all the Return I have to make to those who may think fit to urge this Objection against me, is, That they are all this while speaking to a wrong Body. I am far from attempting to break in upon the Outworks of Religion, (if Witchcraft must be called so) or to invalidate the Force even of the weakest Argument it has to support it self withal. I deny neither the Being of Spirits, nor the Being of Witches, but will allow both the one and the other all the Credit and Authority they can reasonably pretend to. But then, I desire to be excused, if I cannot give my Assent to every idle Story, and believe that to be an Instance of Witchcraft, which whimsical and credulous People shall affirm to be such.

How important soever the Belief of Witches may be suppos'd to be, I imagine, it will receive but little Confirmation from this particular Story ; since both the Facts themselves, as well as the Conclusions which have been drawn from them, are such as (I fancy) will not find an easy Admittance with Men of Thought and Consideration. And therefore, I hope I shall not be blamed, for endeavouring to show the Vanity of an Argument, which, if insisted upon, would (instead of gaining Men over to this Opinion) expose it to the
Con-

Contempt and Scorn of all those, who are not disposed to believe every thing that is told them.

This is all the Apology that I shall make in Defence of my self. If any one now should be desirous to search to the Bottom of this whole Story, and have so little to do, as to look into these Papers, I do not wholly despair of his reaping some small Satisfaction from the Perusal of them. If my Judgment has not been deficient, the Advantages which I have had above some others that have wrote on the same Side, cannot fail of Recommending this Performance: For it has been my Fortune to be placed but a very few Miles distant from the Parish where these Things were transacted; which, as it could not but put me upon taking them into a more serious Examination, so it has given me an Opportunity of Informing my self in some material Circumstances, which (it may be presumed) those who were more remote could not be so well acquainted with.

The Case of the Hertfordshire Witchcraft consider'd, &c.

AFTER the great Dust that has of late been raised by the pretended *Witchcraft* of *Jane Wenham*, the Reader will not, I conceive, be surprized to find me enquiring into a Story of so peculiar a Nature.

I have been for a long time very Curious to know the Truth of those many Reports, that have been raised upon that Subject; and was glad at length to find, that we were not left wholly to rely upon the Authority of the credulous and unthinking Multitude; being very sensible how many Circumstances of Importance might by that means very easily have been lost in the carrying, how many more forg'd and invented, or taken up without a sufficient Examination of the Grounds upon which they stand.

I have read over Mr. *Bragge's Narrative*, and I think with that Care and Application that is requisite, in order to discover, as well the Credibility of the Matters themselves, as also the Foundation that is in them to support that Charge of *Witchcraft* which has been fixed upon this *Jane Wenham*; but after all the Care and Pains that I have taken to satisfy my self, the Story does not seem so clear to me, as to admit of no Scruple. Many Things there are, which are not so plainly prov'd as could be wish'd; many taken up upon little or no Foundation; and all of them, tho' never so certain in themselves, do yet seem to have but

A

little

little Force, with regard to the Proof of those Things to which they have been apply'd.

So that notwithstanding all that this Author has attempted, in order to convince the World of the *Witchcraft* of this Woman, I am (for my own part) very much in the dark concerning it : I see no Foundation for his Assurance ; and find my self still (as to those Matters) in the same Degree of Scepticism as I was before.

It is not, in the mean time, the Design of these Papers, in the least to oppose the Possibility of the Being of Witches in General. So far I am from that, that I am very inclinable to believe, there may be such Persons in the World. I will not pretend to determine the Extent of the Devil's Power over us ; nor to say how far it is possible, or not possible, for any one to maintain a Correspondence and Familiarity with him. My Business is only to examine into the particular Case before us, in order to satisfy my self how far Mr. Bragge has made out the Thing he pretends to prove ; viz. *That Jane Wenham is guilty of that Witchcraft which has been charg'd upon her.*

This is, in short, the whole Design of the following *Enquiry* ; in which I shall endeavour to proceed as clearly and fairly as may be. Whatever occurs in his *Narrative* that is material, shall be consider'd ; whatever is attested by sufficient Evidence, shall be admitted ; and whatever Force it has to prove the Matter now in Debate, shall be readily granted. In a word, The Reader may expect to meet with all that Fairness and Impartiality, that may be thought reasonable in one, who desires only to be well inform'd, and who designs freely to give up, upon just and reasonable Grounds of Conviction.

But before I enter upon this Business, it will be necessary to take notice, That here are Two Questions which ought to be carefully distinguished. The First is, Whether these Matters of Fact, *as they are here related,*

lated, do argue any thing really preternatural ; or where-
in the Assistance of some Evil Spirit is necessarily required ?
The other ; Whether or no, this being granted, there
be sufficient Reason to conclude, *That Jane Wenham is*
at all concerned in the Case ? These Two Questions, I
say, must be distinguished ; because they are really
very different from each other. For it does by no
means follow, That because *Anne Thorn*, or *Anne Street*,
have done and suffered strange Things by the Power
and Malice of the Devil, that therefore *Jane Wenham*
has been employ'd by the Devil, as an Instrument in
these Matters.

Another Thing which I shall here once for all ac-
quaint the Reader with, is, That in searching out the
Truth of these Relations, I shall make no manner of
Account of the Testimonies of *Matthew Gilston*, *Anne*
Thorn, or *Anne Street*, any further than as they come
back'd and confirm'd with Authority of indifferent and
credible Witnesses. And for this, I think, there is the
greatest Reason in the World. For, in the first place,
these are the Persons principally concern'd in this
Witchcraft, and therefore if there be any Design of *Cheat*
or *Imposture*, it can no where be so much suspected as
in them. And then besides, the Two latter are evi-
dently very much *disturbed in their Imaginations*, ('tis no
matter how) and for that Reason, I think, there can
but little Credit be given to what they say, especially
to what they relate as done whilst their *Fits* were upon
them. This therefore is but a reasonable and necessary
Scruple ; and which, if Mr. *Bragge* had well consi-
der'd of before-hand, might have made him more cau-
tious in this Account which he has given us : For I
find, there are many Facts, and those of Conse-
quence too, which he has related as undoubted Truths,
and for no other Reason that I can find, but because
they told him so.

These things being briefly premised, I come now to examine a little into the Matters contained in this Narrative. In the doing which, I shall follow them (as near as I can) in the same Order in which they stand, tho' I shall not trouble myself to transcribe the entire Stories, desiring my Reader to lay Mr. *Bragge's* Papers before him, and to have recourse to them as often as occasion shall require.

The first Story is that of *Matthew Gilston*, who, it seems, was sent by this *Jane Wenham* to *Munders-hill* for a Pennyworth of Straw, &c. Now here, in the first place, I would desire to know what Certainty we have of the Matters contained in this Relation? Did any one see this Old Woman that came to him at the Barn-door? Did they hear her ask him for a Pennyworth of Straw? Further; Did any one see this Boy at *Munders-hill*? Did they see him come home with Straw in his Shirt? I cannot find any Answer to these material

Questions. We are told indeed, * That some
 * *Discovery*, Persons saw this Matthew Gilston running up-
 p. 2. on this Fool's Errand: But who were these Per-
 sons, and when did they see him? Were
 they Persons of *Honesty* and *Credit*? Did they see him
 going to or from *Munders-hill*? And did they know what
 was the *Occasion* of his going? All these things are very
 material Points, and should have been clearly made out,
 had Mr. *Bragge* a mind that any one should have believed
 this Story besides himself: And therefore because he has
 given us no manner of Account of these Matters,
 I think we have reason to conclude, either that he
 could not; or else that he has not been so exact in his
 Relation as he ought to have been. But admitting all
 this to be true, I do not see what Proof he will be able
 to draw from hence, to support his pretended *Witchcraft*.
 For, may not an Old Woman ask a Boy for Straw?

May

May not this Boy refuse to give it? And may he not afterwards run away from his Work, and all this without *Conjuration*? But why, you will say, to *Munders-hill*? Why, to stuff his Shirt with Straw? Why to run through Rivers, Ditches, and all that comes in his way? What Account can be given of all these odd and extravagant Whimsies? Why truly, I must say, no very good one, that I can see. The Story is, I must own, odd enough; but I think it does not immediately follow, that all this cannot be done without *Witchcraft*. Cannot a silly, idle Boy, grow lazy, and have Tricks in his Head, without being beholden to the Devil for his assistance? If all the *freakish Tricks* that Boys play must be ascribed to *Sorcery*, there will never be wanting Materials, to furnish out as many Books of *Witchcraft*, as Mr. Bragge, has Leisure and Inclination to write.

But let us give the Devil his due, if this be so, and suppose for once that it was all his Roguery; how is *Jane Wenham* all this while any way concerned in this Relation? A poor Old Woman asks a Boy for Straw; the Boy denies her, and immediately after the Devil (for so we are now taught to suppose) seizes him; therefore *Jane Wenham* has bewitched him. A very pithy Argument this indeed! But pray, where is the Connexion of this Reasoning? Does the Boy so much as know that it was *Jane Wenham* that asked him for Straw? He says no such thing, but only in general Terms that it was *an Old Woman*. But granting that this Old Woman was *Jane Wenham*; does it therefore follow that she was the Occasion of his Running? I would fain know from Mr. Bragge, by what Rules of Logick this Argument can be made good; and should think my self very much obliged to him, if in the next Edition of his *Narrative* he would reduce it into the Form of *Syllogism*.

But perhaps we may meet with better Luck than this in the next Relation. *Anne Thorne*, a Young Woman of about 16 Years, has a Fancy to run for *Sticks*, as the other had for Straw: But here, it seems, the Devil is a little modest, and contents himself with Stripping her of her Gown and Apron only. However, she runs, it seems, half a Mile right out, and in the space of 6 or 7 Minutes brings home a Bundle; and all this too when her Knee was just Sett, having, it seems, been lately put out. But here again we find many things wanting, which are too material not to have been enquired into, or if known, not to have been related. Mr. *Bragge* tells us, that she run a Mile in the Space of about Seven Minutes. But how does this appear? Did Mr. *Gardiner* compute the time by his *Clock* or *Watch*? The Story does not say he did, and I am very apt to think he did not; for he having no suspicion before-hand of *Anne Thorn's* running for *Sticks*, it is not likely he should have been so curious unless he had some other Reason for it. Well then, did he speak by *guess* only, or *according to the best of his Judgment*? If that be the Case (as seems to me most likely) I do not well see how Mr. *Gardiner*, or any one else under those Circumstances, could be so exact as to ascertain the time that had pass'd to Six or Seven Minutes. Mr. *Gardiner* was in the Par-lour conversing with his Wife and Friend, for which reason it is natural enough to suppose, that he could not be so accurate as to point of Time, but that Six or Seven Minutes *more* might slip away without his observation. Now Six or Seven Minutes, through a very small mistake in Mr. *Gardiner*, will make very considerable alteration in the present Case; for this being once supposed, the time in which *Anne Thorn* run this Mile will amount to very near a quarter of an Hour, and then her running will (instead of Eight) be at the Rate of about Four Mile an Hour: a Swiftneſs which I think may very well be accounted for without the Power of *Witcraft*.

But to go on, How are we assured that this Maid run as far as *Hackney-Lane*? Did any Body see her at the Place where she is said to have gathered the Sticks? I cannot find by any thing here related that they did. All that we are told is, *That Two of John Chapman's Men saw her running that way up the Hill*, but it is P. 5. not said how far the Tree where she had the Sticks, is from that Place where these Men saw her; so that for any thing we are told to the contrary, the Girl might not be above half way to the Place where she is said to have got her Sticks, and might soon after gather them up and come running back again: And if this be true, then this wonderful Story will still admit of a more easy Solution. All these Circumstances therefore Mr. *Bragge* ought well to have examined into, and particularly specify'd in his Narrative. It is not guessing or talking at random that can do the Business. These are Points very material; and the unaccountableness of the whole Story (and consequently the Witchcraft) does absolutely depend upon them. But this is not the only Instance we have of this Author's Exactness.

But because it is necessary not to insist with him too much upon Niceties, put the Case that, *Anne Thorn* did really run just so far, and in just the same time that he would have it to be, I do not yet after all this see how it proves the thing, he would infer from it; It is no such wonderful thing for one to run Eight Miles in an Hour, that we must needs call in the Devil to his assistance. How many are there that can run (I speak modestly) Nine or Ten? But to deal ingeniously; I am not very forward to think *Anne Thorn* is so nimble a Racer? But then it deserves, I think, to be considered, whether or no her *Distemper* or *Fits* (whatever you will call it) might not furnish her with such Powers and Abilities as Nature had refused to give her. It would be a thing incredible, had we not daily Instances of it before our Eyes, how much the *Muscular Force* may be increased by *Nervous Disorders*. What a prodigious strength do

do we see in distracted Persons ? How common is it for weak and helpless Women, when in an *Hysterical Fit*, to exert themselves in such violent Strugglings, as that Three or Four stout Men shall hardly be able to restrain them ? These are Observations which no body can be a Stranger to, and which are not so vastly distant from this present Case, as may perhaps be imagined. For what is *Running*, I would know, but a swift and violent motion (principally) of the lower Limbs ? And how is this done but by the force of the Muscles that actuate those Parts ? If therefore the strength of any other part may be so much augmented by a Natural Distemper, as we have before observed, why may not the same be said of those whereof we are now speaking, so that a Person who can in a Natural State run not above Two Miles an Hour, may, by an increase of the *Muscular Force*, in a Double, Treble, or Quadruple Proportion, be enabled to run Four, Six, or Eight. This is a very natural and easy Supposition ; neither do we want an Instance to confirm it, if the Reader will credit an Account lately given me by a Person of great Worth and Integrity, *viz.* Of a Boy, who ran with a prodigious Swiftmess, from no other evident Cause but a Distemper of this Nature.

But I foresee that it may here be objected, that *Anne Thorn's Knee* having been so lately put out, it seems impossible, that that part should have been capable of so violent a Motion, how much soever the moving force may be suppos'd to have been increased. Very like so ! But I am not so easily satisfy'd, that her Knee was ever out at all ; and am inclined rather to believe that it was no more than *Strained*. Mr. Bragge indeed has at the end of his Narrative given us a Certificate from one *William Green*, whom he is pleased to call *the Surgeon that set Anne Thorn's Knee*, which tells us that it was really out of Joint. But who is this *William Green* who attests this ? By Mr. Bragg's calling him a *Surgeon*, the Reader may perhaps look upon him as some considerable

derable Body ; that he has served Seven Years at *St. Thomas's Hospital*, and understands what he pretends to very well. But it is very fit he should be inform'd here, that he is an ignorant *Pretender* ; one who does not understand the Business of *Chirurgery* half so well as he does Farming, which I am told is his proper Employment.

I my self can give the Reader one Specimen of his extraordinary Judgment, in the Case of a Gentleman who had the Misfortune to dislocate his *Collar-bone* ; and altho' the Dislocation was so visible, that any one might discern it ; yet this wise Son of *Apollo* could never be persuaded that it was so, till it was too late to reduce it ; so that the Bone is out of Joint to this Day. Now he that could be deceived in such an Instance as that, and say that the Bone was not out, when it so apparently was, may (I think) as easily be deceiv'd in this ; and say that *Anne Thorne's* Knee was out, when really it was not. But there is one Circumstance in this very Story, which is Demonstration to me, that *Anne Thorne's* Knee was not really out of Joynt. Mr. Green tells us, that after he had set this Knee, *Anne Thorne* was very lame, and not able to walk : And yet Mrs. Gardiner, but the very next Morning, P. 5. could think her well enough to go to a Neighbour's House to fetch Pease. This shows then, that by the next Morning she was able to go tolerably well ; for otherwise I do not think Mrs. Gardiner would have been so unreasonable as to have put her upon it. But was it ever yet heard of, that a Person who had dislocated her Knee, should be able to go of such an Errand, when it had been set at most but 24 Hours before ? I have talk'd with some who are good Judges of this Matter, and they all agree, That had the Case been really so, she would not by that time have been able so much as to have set her Foot upon the Ground ; and that People under those Circumstances, are not able to walk under 6, 8, or 10 Days Confinement. If Mr. Bragge should

should pretend that she went for these Pease too, by the Power and Assistance of the *Devil*; I must confess, I know not well how I should be able to disprove that. But he must be very cautious of saying this, lest he makes Mrs. Gardiner a Witch, as well as *Jane Wrenham*.

But it may be urged further; That granting it to be true that her Knee was no more than *strained*, yet that even then it seems very unlikely, that she should be capable of running so soon; because of the violent Pain, which would necessarily have attended such a Motion. But I answer; That the Disorder which *Anne Thorne* was under from the Fit which was then upon her, might so far divert and fix her Thoughts at that time, as to render her wholly insensible of any Pain, or at least stupify her so much, as to make her not unwilling to comply with that Humour of Running. It is what we see in many Instances, That when the Mind is deeply engag'd upon one particular Object, the Senses are as it were bound up, and the Exercises of their respective Faculties suspended for some time. But to what purpose, you will say, should she run; or what should move her to this extravagant Whimsy? Why she herself has given us a very good Account of that. *She found, she says, a Roaming in her Head, and she thought she must of Necessity run somewhere.* That is to say, She was a little besides herself; her Thoughts were unsettled, her Imagination disturb'd, and so she runs a Gadding as other distracted Folks are wont to do, she knows neither for what, nor where. I am very confident, the Reader will not think it an Objection against me, that I cannot give a precise Account of every Whim, that comes in the Heads of *Vapour'd* and *Brainsick* Wenches; for these not proceeding from any Principle of Reason, are not therefore the Subject of Rational Enquiry.

-----*Quæ res*

*Nec modum habet neq; concilium ratione modoq;
Tractari non vult-----* says Horace.

and

and therefore he very handsomely exposes the Folly of attempting to bring such things as these to any certain Rule or Measure,

*Hæc si
Mobila & circa fluctantia Sorte pararet
Reddere certa sibi, nihilo plus explicet ac si
Insanire paret, certa Ratione modoque.*

Horat. Sat. 2.

We have now considered this Story as to the Truth of this Fact, and also how far it is an Argument of something *Preternatural*. The Deficiencies are so very remarkable with respect to both, that the Reader cannot but have observed them. Let us now consider how far, supposing this to be *Diabolical*, *Jane Wenham* is concerned in it. With relation to this we are told, That when *Anne Thorn* was got as far as *Hackney-Lane*, she saw a little Old Woman muffled up in a Riding-Hood, who ask'd her whither she was going, &c. But why does Mr. Bragge tell us all this? Why! For no other Reason that I can see, but because *Anne Thorne* has told him so. But I have before observed, that what she says is not in the least to be depended upon. Mr. Bragge appeals to Two of *John Chapman's* Men for the Truth of this whole Story; but very unreasonably: For after *Anne Thorn* was got past them, as they were going down the Hill they saw no more of her, and consequently can be no Evidence for what passed afterwards; so that it might, notwithstanding any thing that *John Chapman's* Men have affirm'd, be only the *Supposition* of a wild Fancy. And so indeed I am apt to think it was: For a little while after, we find this poor Wretch with Mr. Chauncy and Thomas Ireland at her Heels, running again upon the same Errand. Here again when she comes home she tells the same Story of the Old Woman; but neither of the other Two that I can find say any thing at all of her. They saw in-

deed *Anne Thorn* put forth her Hand towards the Hedge, as if she reached for something ; but so she might very well, and at the same time neither see nor take any thing but the Sticks which she was gathering. It may be said perhaps, that this Old Woman being behind the Hedge it might not be possible for either of these Two Persons to see her, they themselves being likewise behind the Hedge (as we are left to guess) on the other side of the Way. But it is here very wonderful to me, that our noble Knight-Errant, who upon all other Occasions shew'd himself so resolutely brave, did not now spring forth out of his Ambuscade, and endeavour to seize this Hag of an *Enchantress*. Surely, had I been he, when I saw *Anne Thorn* putting forth her Hand as if she reach'd for something, I would for once have ventur'd my Carcass, and seen whether any Body had been to be found behind the Hedge or not. But after all, notwithstanding it is possible that this Old Woman might have been hid behind the Hedge, this will do Mr. *Bragge* no great service. For here it seems was *something* said by this Old Woman to *Anne Thorn*, viz. *That she need not come any more for Sticks*. Very strange ! That an Old Woman should come and *talk* to this Girl, and no Body so much as *see* or *hear* any thing of her, when the Girl was at the same time under guard of Two Men, who had followed her close at the Heels to keep her from doing her self any mischief. In short, Mr. *Bragge* has given us no manner of reason to think, that there was any Old Woman at all seen by *Anne Thorn* : It was therefore probably a pure Whim, and Figment, of a wild and distracted Imagination, without any manner of truth or reality in it.

But supposing here for once, that this was more than bare Delusion ; Who was this Old Woman, I would fain know, who was behind the Hedge ? Does *Anne Thorn* say that it was *Jane Wenham* ? She says no such thing that I can find, but only with *Matthew Gilston* that it was an Old Woman ; but she knows not who.

Further

Further yet, supposing it were *Fane Wenham*, how does it from hence appear that she was any ways instrumental in sending her upon this foolish Errand ? Might not *Fane Wenham* meet her accidentally in that place ? Was it not natural enough for her, seeing the Wench in such violent haste, to ask her whither she was going ? Might she not, being perhaps accustomed to Hedge-breaking her self, be able to inform her, that there were no Sticks to be had at *Cromer* ? And might she not too, seeing she had nothing to bind up her Sticks in, bid her pull off her Gown, or seeing her pull it off of her own accord, give her a Pin to fasten it with ? As strange and wonderful as all this is, I think it may be done without *Sorcery* ?

But it seems this Wench's Head run all this while upon *Fane Wenham* : Well, and what then ? Does it therefore necessarily follow from thence, that *Fane Wenham* had bewitched her ? Cannot a crack-brain'd Creature think of any one, but presently he must be Witch or Wizzard ? Mr. *Bragge* ought to be very careful how he follows this Argument too closely ; the Consequences being very dangerous. If this be true, the poor innocent *Sweetheart* may be called in to bear snacks with *Fane Wenham* in this *Conjuration* ; he, 'tis more than probable, run much in the Girls Head too, and for any thing I can tell may be the greatest Sorcerer. But be that as it will ; it is no great wonder that the poor Girl finding her self in an odd Condition, and hearing every Body's Mouth opened against this *Fane Wenham*, should begin to think her self in ill handling, and be ready enough too to lay it upon the Back of *Fane Wenham*. This may be supposed, and I think without much straining ; and this will be reason enough why this *Fane Wenham* should be thus continually running in her Head.

But to clinch the matter home, here comes a very strange and surprizing Accident. We will burn the Old Witch, cries Mrs. *Gardiner*, and then throws Sticks,
Pin

Pin and all into the Fire. Immediately in comes *Fane Wenham* with a Lye in her Mouth. But how does Mr. *Bragge* know that *Fane Wenham* told a Lye, when she told *Goody Thorne*, that she must go to *Ardley-Bury*, to Wash the next Day? Why, because it seems he had made Enquiry at *Ardley-Bury*: i.e. I suppose he had made Enquiry of Sir *Henry Chauncy*, whether or no they were to Wash the next Day; and whether Mother *Wenham* was sent with any such Message to *Goody Thorne*. If I am mistaken, Mr. *Bragge* must thank himself for it. He should have told us of whom this Enquiry was made, that we might have seen whether or no they were Persons that were likely to know any thing at all of the Matter. But passing by all this; how does Mother *Wenham*'s coming in with a Lye in her Mouth, prove her to be a *Witch*? Why, she came in just when the Sticks and Pin were a burning. Perhaps so: And so might Mr. *Bragge* himself, for any thing I can tell to the contrary. Might not any Person accidentally do the same thing? And must he, for that Reason, be certainly concluded a *Sorcerer*? Had she been observed to do this several times successively, that perhaps would have gone some way towards the proving it more than Chance.

But instead of this we find the contrary: For P. 8. a little after we are told there were more Sticks burnt upon the same Occasion, and yet no *Fane Wenham* appeared, that I can find by the Relation. All the Difference here to be observed, is, That whereas in the former Story the Sticks and the Pin were burnt together; in the latter the Pin was left in the Gown. I know not what stress may be laid upon this; but, for my part, he that can draw a poor decrepid old Wretch out of her Chimney-corner, in cold Weather too, merely by the burning of a Pin, I should look upon him to be the greatest Conjurer of the two.

And now I have done with the first Story relating to *Anne Thorne*; which I have been the more particular in, because I suppose it to be one of the principal Pillars whereon

whereon Mr. Bragge endeavours to support his Supposition of *Witchcraft*. It is evident, I think, that there are many things wanting in this Narrative that are necessary to render the Story compleat : And that even granting it to be as true as Mr. Bragge can desire, there is no great Foundation for those Inferences which he has been pleased to draw from it. Let us now therefore go on to the rest, and see if we can find out any thing that may be more to the Purpose.

I can find nothing now worth taking notice of till we come to Page 6. where we find *Anne Thorne* in another Fit, running (if she could) for more Sticks, and leaping over a *Five-barr'd Gate*. Let us see what can be made of this Story. *Anne Thorne* is in a Fit, she runs out of doors in a great Hurry ; and meeting with a *Five-barr'd Gate* in her way, she *scrambles* over it very nimbly some way or other, we know not how. A mighty Thing indeed this, for a *Spirit of such Power and Wisdom* (Cunning I should have called it) as the Devil is to concern himself in ! But I would desire the Reader here a little to consider, whether or no this *Leaping* of Mr. Bragge's might not be (as I said) *Scrambling* ? No, he says ; for Mrs. *Gardiner* and many Others saw her *leap* : But who were these *several Others* ? Were they honest Men ? And did they observe exactly how she got over ? I do not find thus much in his Accounts ; and therefore as to these *By-standers*, let them be so still. Well, but it seems Mrs. *Gardiner* saw her leap : If she did, I will believe it ; but she, as I am told, says no such thing, only that she got over some how or other very nimbly. Neither do the other Persons, that I can hear, agree in their Accounts ; some saying that she *leaped*, and others that she *leaned her self upon the Top of the Gate*, and so *threw* her self over. But to pleasure Mr. Bragge, we will for once put in the word *Leap*. He says then, that *Anne Thorne leaped* over this Gate. Very well ; But what does he mean by *Leaping* ?
Why

Why that we may pretty well guess at, when we come to consider the Notion he has of *Vaulting*. Now by this I find he understands no more than

Comp. p. 4. *Climbing*. *Anne Thorne* tells us, that when
 with p. 6. she was running to *Hackney-Lane*, she *Climb-
 ed* over a *Four-barr'd Gate*. He tells us, that the Gate which *Anne Thorne* now *Leaped* over, was the same that she had before *Vaulted* over (meaning, I suppose, the very Gate she spoke of). Now, because it is not civil to suppose either *Anne Thorne*, or *Mr. Bragge*, to be under a Mistake; it must therefore be granted, that according to *Mr. Bragge's Account*, *Vaulting* and *Climbing* amount to much the same thing. If then *Vaulting* is the same with *Climbing*, why may not *Leap-
 ing* and *Climbing*, or *Leaping* and *Scrambling* be the same, since it is plain that *Leaping* and *Vaulting* are the very same? Well; but whatever may be made of this Relation, as it is here set down; it is, it seems very certain, that *Anne Thorne* did leap. For we are told, p. 8. that *Mr. Arthur Chauncy* and *Thomas Ireland* accompanying her from Stick-gathering, they would have forced her through the open Gate; but that, notwithstanding all their Endeavours, she was forced over that which was shut, with an incredible swiftness. But all this time we are not told whether she leapt fairly and cleanly over, or whether she laid her Hands, or any other Part of her Body, upon the Gate. Now if this were all, this might be done with a very great (and what *Mr. Chauncy* perhaps would call an incredible) swiftness; and that without a Miracle. But at p. 26. comes in this *Mr. Arthur Chauncy* again, and swears, that she went over as nimbly as a Greyhound. That might be, and nothing wonderful in it neither; for I have sometimes seen a Greyhound go over a Gate very soberly, and now and then taking the Top of the Gate in his way: Nay, but she went over as nimbly as ever he saw a Greyhound leap over such a Gate. It may perhaps be pleasant enough to *Mr. Chauncy* to see, or *Mr. Bragge* to relate, how young Wenches can flirt over Bars and

and Gates ; but I am sorry it was *sworn* to. A Man ought to be more cautious when he speaks to the Truth of a Fact, which in its Consequences, may affect the Life of any Person, than when he relates a pleasant Story only for his own or his Company's Diversion. And yet by his Manner of expressing himself, Mr. *Chauncy* seems to have forgot the Place he was in, and to have told this Story in the same merry and figurative Manner, that he would have done over a Glass of Wine.

But we will now suppose what Mr. *Bragge* would have, and admit that *Anne Thorne* did really leap over this Gate, and with any swiftness that he can desire, (less I mean than that of a Greyhound in his full-speed) : We will, I say, admit all this, and see what Account can be given of this Matter. I have before given my Opinion concerning the Business of *Anne Thorne's* Running, *viz.* that it might possibly be occasioned by an Augmentation of the Force of Muscular Motion from Common Causes. Now if the Force of the Muscles may be so much increased this way, as to enable a Person to *run* with four times the swiftness (or more) that he usually can ; why may not the same thing be said of *Leaping*, since that depends mainly upon the Motion of the same Parts ? Insomuch that a Person who can leap any given Height with a given Velocity, may be enabled by the Augmentation of that Force, to leap at any Rate proportionable to that Augmentation ? I see no manner of Difficulty in this Supposition ; nor will any one, I believe, who understands any thing at all of the Animal Oeconomy. And although it is not so often that we meet with Cases of this Nature ; yet what I have said is, I hope, enough to show the Thing possible ; and that there is therefore no such Necessity upon this Occasion to have recourse to Supernatural Causes.

By this time, I hope, we are got over this Five-barr'd Gate, tho' I cannot say with the same Ease and Expedition that *Anne Thorne* is said to have done. However, I think we are safely Landed on the other Side, and

without straining ourselves so much, but that we can without much trouble proceed to the following Parts of the Narrative. I shall only stop here a while, whilst I consider how far *Jane Wenham* is concerned in this Matter.

Now for this, we are told, (p. 6.) That in the beginning of *Anne Thorne's* Fit, *she made Signs to Jane Wenham's House*; and afterward (p. 7.) when her Disorder was over, and she had taken a little Rest, That *she was strongly prompted to go to Jane Wenham's House, saying, She would have some of her Blood.* That accordingly she did go to *Jane Wenham's*, and accused her as being the Cause of her Torments; and more Words to that purpose. This is all that I can find with relation to this Story, that fixes this supposed *Witchcraft* upon *Jane Wenham*. But because these are Circumstances, which frequently occur throughout this whole Narrative, I shall, to prevent Repetitions, reserve them to be considered by themselves afterwards. The same I shall do with regard to the *Maid's Recovery out of her Fits, immediately upon Jane Wenham's coming to her, Jane Wenham's Confession, &c.*

We are come now to Three Informations more, given in before Sir Henry Chauncy; Where the first that occurs is that of *Susan Aylott*, who depos'd, *That about 12 Years ago, last Christmas, she was sent for to the Wife of Richard Harvey, who was then in a very strange Condition. That, as soon as she came thither, Jane Wenham, having followed her, went under the Window, and cried out, Why do they let this Creature lye here? Why do they not take her and hang her out of the way? And that Night (it seems) the Sick Woman died.*

The next is that of the same *Susan Aylott*, who depos'd further, *That soon after this Jane Wenham came to her House, and looking upon a Child which lay upon her Lap; and stroaking it, said, Susan, you have a fine Child. That*

the Sunday following, this Child was taken in a grievous Condition, stark Distracted; and so died the Tuesday following.

The last is that of Thomas Adams, who deposed, That about Three Weeks or a Month before Christmas, he met this Jane Wenham in his Turnip-field, stealing Turnips; which caused some Words between them. That on Christmas-Day one of his best Sheep died, without any Signs of Illness in the Body after it was opened. That 9 or 10 Days after died another in a most unaccountable manner; and shortly after two more Sheep died also, none of them having any Marks of any Disease upon them, but being sound in all their Parts, as his Shepherd inform'd him. He says further, That his Shepherd tells him, that one other Sheep was taken strangely, skipping, and standing upon its Head, but in half an Hour was well, and continues so. And another Sheep was likewise very ill for two or three Days, but is now well again: And Jane Wenham having the Common Fame of a Witch, he does believe, that if they were bewitched, she did bewitch them.

It were pity to have parted these Informations, they are all of them so nearly related to one another; and now after they are thus nakedly set down, I challenge the gravest Man upon Earth to contain himself from Laughing. That any Man who pretends to Sense, and good Reasoning, should stuff out a Narrative with such palpable and consummate Nonsense! Does Mr. Bragge think there is any Argument in all this? If not, he might, one would think, have been so good a Husband of his own Time, and so tender of the Reader's Patience, as not to have troubled him with so much Impertinence: If he does, it is still more wonderful, how any Man should be so much a Master of his own Judgment, as to force it, so much against Common Reason, to subscribe to such Conclusions. A poor Woman lies at the point of Death; Jane Wenham, a foul-mouth'd Wretch, comes and Scolds under her Window; The Woman dies soon after, therefore this Jane Wenham had

bewitch'd her. Very good! But let us go on. *Jane Wenham* sees a lovely Child in her Neighbour's Lap; she is tempted to stroke and caress the Infant: Soon after the Babe dies stark distracted; and therefore again *Jane Wenham* had bewitched it. What surprizing Conclusions are these; and what may not one prove by this way of Reasoning? As well might it be said, That it was destroy'd by the Care and Fondness of its own Mother; or that the *Sugar'd Milk*, or *Plumb-Cake*, were Poyson, which it had eaten the Day before.

But this, perhaps you'll say, is more than bare Accident: For at p. 28. we may meet with another Instance of the same Nature. *Elizabeth Field* had a Nurse-Child, which (it seems) was also stroked by this *Jane Wenham*, and died convulsed in some short time after. And may not all this be, without the Help of *Witchcraft*? Might not *Jane Wenham* have the same ill Luck twice in her whole Life? Alas! she has shown to all the World, that she can be more than once unfortunate. It is not to me in the least wonderful, that after *Susan Aylott* had made that unlucky Observation upon her Child, that the whole Parish should now begin to set their Heads at Work, to find out Instances of the same Nature. And I dare swear, that could they have found out but one more for Twenty Years backward, that had died (as they call it) in a *strange and unaccountable manner*, and it could have been prov'd that *Jane Wenham* had ever once touched it, they have such an Opinion of *Jane Wenham*, that they would infallibly have laid all the Mischief at her Door. But I will here beg leave to make one Enquiry. Did ever *Jane Wenham* make any Pretensions to this Power, which is here ascrib'd to her Stroaking? Did she ever say, *She had a Power to destroy these Children* whilst they were well; or did she threaten, or foretel they should shortly dye, before the Time that she stroaked them? This is what Mr. *Bragge* ought to have told us, and have clearly prov'd

too, had he a mind to say any thing at all to the Purpose. If this had been the Case, and her *Stroaking* had had the same Effect for several times together; that would indeed have gone a great way towards proving, that she was *Conscious* of this Power in her self; and would have inclin'd me to believe, that she had some, *more than ordinary*, Dealings with the *Devil*. But it is so far from being certain that she had any Design of destroying these Children, that there are some Circumstances in this Story of *Susan Aylott*, which make the contrary more probable. For *Fane Wenham*, it seems, had some time before fallen out with *Susan Aylott*, and had now a mind to reconcile her self to her. This now is a Natural Reason enough, why she should seem fond of this Infant; since every one knows, that the surest way to gain the Affections of the Parents, is to shew a Regard and Respect for their Children. We do not indeed find the same Circumstance in the Story of *Elizabeth Field*, but it is very likely that the Case might be the same.

But here at last comes the Wonder of Wonders: This poor Wretch, *Fane Wenham*, is *Stealing* of *Turnips*, to keep her self from Starving. *J. Adams*, the Owner of these *Turnips*, catches her in the very Fact, chides her severely, and sends her away Grumbling. Some time after this, here is a lamentable do among the Sheep: Some dye, others are sick, and others are well; and all this too (as the Learned Shepherd says) without any Signs of Distemper. Alas poor *Fane*! Now all the World will cry out against thee, as the most wicked and dangerous of thy Kind. But I pray, cannot a Sheep *burst its Gut*, or have the *Staggers*, without *Magick* and *Inchantment*? I wish Mr. *Bragge* would be pleas'd to publish the History of the *Life and Death* of these Sheep, that we may know their Cases exactly. And since so much depends upon a just Account of the
 Sheep

Sheep of the Parish, I should be heartily glad to hear that he was chosen *Biographer* to all the Flocks.

But we need not stay any longer to expose these Fooleries, which do so effectually expose themselves. The Subject is inviting; but hark! I am call'd away by a Legion of foul Monsters like Cats: They
P. 17. *Speak to me; they tell me I must go.* Surely they must be the Ambassadors of Satan, they scratch so, and make *such a hellish Noise!* They must be the Imps of Mother *Wenham*, their Features do so exactly resemble her! 'Tis certainly so! They are arm'd too with *Knives and Razors*, and tempt me to *stab* my self, or to *cut my Throat*. Oh where is Mr. *Chauncy*, that Scourge of *Devils*, and of *Cats!* Look, look, Sir! That, that's Mother *Wenham*; kill her, and the Charm is broke! But, whither am I going? Let me recover my Senses a little, lest I grow mad too, and furnish Mr. *Bragge* with Materials for a Second Narrative. To be serious then: This Story of the *Cats* is so ridiculous, that methinks I know not who to pity most, whether the poor *distracted Creature*, or Mr. *Bragge*, who has thought it worth his while to insist upon it, as a Proof of his *pretended Witchcraft*. What, I would fain know, can any one conclude from such Relations as these? Here is a poor *shatter'd Wretch*, who tells us she sees *Cats*, with Faces like Mother *Wenham*, which speak to her, and threaten to torment her: And from hence we are taught to conclude, that this *Wenham* is a *Witch*, and that *Anne Thorne* is bewitched by her! This is so exactly like Mr. *Bragge's* way of Reasoning, that had I seen it any where else, I should no more have doubted whether or no it belong'd to him, than *Anne Thorne* could doubt who the *Cats* belong'd to, when she observed their Features. The Reader will easily observe, how rich a Vein of such Arguments as these runs thro' this whole Narrative. But pray, let us examine a little into the *Circumstances* of this Story.

Anne Thorne, it seems, sees a thing like a Cat; for a Cat it could not be, because it spoke to her. But how, I would know, can we be assured of all this, since it depends so *entirely* upon *Anne Thorne's* Testimony? Was any one with *Anne Thorne* at any time, when she said she saw these Cats? Yes, it seems, *James Burville* has given in upon Oath, in open Court, That he was present several times when *Anne Thorne* said she saw Cats about her Bed: And more he would have attested, but this was thought sufficient by the Court. But what was this I p. 29. wou'd fain know that he would have attested further? Was it that he was sensible of any Cats being in the Chamber when *Anne Thorne* said she saw them? Was it that he heard them speak to *Anne Thorne*, and was sure that she was not deceived? Not one Word of this do we find either of *him* or of *any one else*, throughout this whole Narrative. I do not wonder that the Court was tired out with hearing so many palpable Absurdities; but methinks *Mr. Bragge*, who believes all this Story of the Cats to be true, and is so very angry with those who do not, should have been so much at leisure, as to have told us what *James Burville* had more to say. If the Court had heard enough to serve their turn, the Reader has not in this Account enough to serve his; and therefore he ought to have examined *James Burville*, and to have set down whether or no he saw and heard any Cats speak at the same time that *Anne Thorne* said, She both saw and heard them. Whether this Neglect was the Effect of Design, or Stupidity, I cannot say: It is however Demonstration to me, that *Mr. Bragge* knows very well that *James Burville* never saw nor heard any Cats at all, at that time; for had he been assured of the Contrary, such is his Zeal in this Cause, that he could not possibly have prevailed upon himself, not to have told us of it.

Well! but it seems *Mr. Chauncey*, *James Burville*, and others, did at other times frequently see Creatures like Cats. It is very like so, and it is probable they were Cats; for I do not find any thing here that shows the contrary

contrary. They did not appear to them as they did to *Anne Thorne* ; they had no *Knives* nor *Razors* in their Paws ; they *scratch'd* and *squeal'd* indeed we are told, as Cats do, but I do not hear that they were able to *speak* one Syllable. Besides, Mr. *Chauncey* kill'd one of these, (P. 23.) which is a mischance I am sure the *Devils* are not subject to. If Mr. *Bragge* will say that these were *true Cats*, but sent upon the *Devil's Errand*, I will say something if he can *prove* that, and tell me what Errand they came upon.

But perhaps he will tell us that these were not *all of a Sort*, but a mixture of *Cats* and of *Devils* ; because *James Burville*, and *Thomas Ireland*, saw One or Two of them which had *Faces like Jane Wenham*. But alas poor *James* ! Thou art as mad almost as *Anne Thorne* her self ! *Jane Wenham* has already seiz'd thee, and marked thee out for *Nancy's Husband* ! However, I am here methinks very desirous to know *when it was that these Cats were seen*. I mean, whether in the Night or in the Day ; for if it was in the Night, the difference between the Face of a Cat and that of an *Old Woman* is not so very discernable but that they may possibly be mistaken for one another, especially by those (as we may reasonably suppose these to have been) who are very strongly acted by the Force of Imagination. I cannot say, for my part, who could have been secure from making the same Mistake, if he had for so long time been scared almost out of his Wits by *Witches* and *Wenham's*.

But it will be time enough to look out for a Solution of this, when we are well assured of the truth of the Relation ; at present the Story looks so very ill that I cannot forbear suspecting some *Roguary*. And to justify me in this Suspicion, I would desire the Reader to observe, how the Story of the Cats stands, before, at, and after, the Assizes. The first Account that we have of Cats is at P. 17. where *Anne Thorn* tells us, that she saw Cats appear to her, telling her she must go. At the same time too, there was, it seems, a dismal Noise of Cats heard

heard about the House, accompanied with *Scratchings* under the *Windows*, and at the *Doors* ; and these *Cats* were seen sometimes *Three or Four in a Company*, by Mr: *Chauncy* , *James Burville*, *Thomas Ireland*, and others. The next is at P. 20, but here was nothing seen of, or heard from them, but *Screamings and Scratchings at the Doors*, as before. The last is at P. 23. where *Anne Thorn* gives in upon Oath, that on the 26th of *February* in the Morning, she saw a *Cat* sitting in the Window, which spoke to her, and told her she should have more Pins : And this is all the Account we have of *Cats* before the Tryal. Till then therefore, it is plain, that we have no Evidence of any *Cats* appearing with *Jane Wenham's Face*, neither from *Anne Thorn*, nor any other Person ; neither, of their *Speaking* do we know any thing more than what *Anne Thorn* has told us. And indeed it is what I could not but observe, that the *Speaking* of these *Cats* does wholly depend upon her, and *Anne Street's* Evidence, there being not so much as One Person besides, that I remember, who is said to have heard any thing of this Nature. But to go on : When the Tryal comes on, there we have the first Account of *Cats* being seen with the Face of *Jane Wenham*, and of her conversing with the Devil in the shape of a *Cat*. And after P. 29. the Tryal, we have *Legions* of them poured in upon us, almost in every Page. The Reader may easily satisfy himself of the Truth of this, if he will but cast his Eye upon that part of the *Narrative* which comes after the Tryal. It would be endless to refer to the Story particularly, there being hardly one of them which has not a speaking *Cat* belonging to it.

From this Observation then there arises a very natural and obvious *Query*, viz. Whence comes this change of the *Scene* and of the *Actors* ? Why so many *Cats* at and after ; And why so few before the Tryal ? Why plain *Cats* with *Cats Faces* and *Cats Voices* before ; And why *Cats* with *Jane Wenham's Face* and *Human Voices* afterwards ? The plain Account seems to be this : They had

like to have been *bubbled* of their *Witch*, by the Mistake, (or perhaps the *Art*) of him who drew up the *Indictment*. For some of them having *unluckily* mentioned the Story which *Anne Thorne* told of the *Cats* speaking to her, the whole *stress* of the Cause (as Mr. *Bragge* pathetically complains) was thrown upon this, and *Jane Wenham* was accordingly indicted only for *conversing familiarly*

P. 24. *with the Devil under the shape of a Cat*. This had like to have spoiled all. Their Cause now stands

upon a *False Bottom*, and unless they can some way or other support it, must inevitably fall to the Ground ;

What therefore is now to be done ? Must they drop the *Indictment*, and set the whole World a Laughing ? Or

must they now *wade* (as the Proverb says) *through thick and thin*, and support the *Indictment* as well as they can ?

This latter, it seems, was thought most adviseable ; and to this purpose in come Four Witnesses, *viz.* *Thomas*

Ireland, *James Burville*, *Uriah Wright*, and *Thomas Harvey*. The Two former swore directly, That they

P. 29. *saw Cats with Faces like Jane Wenham*. The Two latter, that they asking *Jane Wenham* once, in

what shape the Devil us'd to appear to her, she replied, *ibid.* that she fancy'd him to be a Cat. Now that *Thomas*

Ireland and *James Burville* should see these *Cats* with *Jane Wenham's* Face before the Tryal, and that we should

not hear One Syllable of this strange Sight till then, is to me a thing very wonderful. But there is something

particular in the Evidence of *Uriah Wright*, and *Thomas Harvey*, which I desire the Reader to observe, *viz.*

That this Information of theirs about the Cat, which was given at the Assizes, was an *Addition* to the Information given in before to Sir *Henry Chauncey*. That In-

formation, as you may find it P. 21. stands thus ; *Uriah*

Wright of *Walkerne* saith upon Oath, That on Sunday last was *Sevenight*, he ask'd *Jane Wenham* whither she had seen

the Devil or no ? She, the said *Jane Wenham*, answered, She had seen him following her, when she has looked over her

Shoulder,

Shoulder, and when she turned her self round he vanished away. This Information was also then sworn to by Thomas Harvey. Now at the Assizes, these two Persons again attested the Substance of the same Information, and added, *that they ask'd the Prisoner in what Shape the Devil us'd to appear to her, and she said she fancy'd him to be a Cat.* Now is it not very strange and incredible, that these Persons should have heard from Jane Wenham, *that the Devil us'd to appear to her in the shape of a Cat,* and yet that they should say nothing of it in their Information given before Sir Henry Chauncy? Is it any way likely, that they should have taken no notice of so material a Circumstance as this. if they had known any thing of it? I know not what Mr. Bragge may think on't, but to me it looks so very much like Knavery, that I hardly know how to think any thing better concerning it.

To draw up therefore the whole Evidence with relation to this Story in a very short compass. Here is not one Soul besides the Girl her self, that pretends ever to have heard any Cats speak. Here are but Two that ever saw any with Jane Wenham's-Face, and this was not mention'd till the Witch was upon her Tryal. And here are but Two neither which heard Jane Wenham say *the Devil us'd to appear to her in the shape of a Cat.* This likewise was not so much as touch'd upon (although they had all the reason in the World to have mentioned it) before the Tryal, when they were assured, that the whole stress of the Cause depended upon that Bottom. And amongst all these, there is not so much as one of the Persons of Credit; no Mr. Gardiner, no, Mrs. Gardiner; no Mr. Strut, no Mr. Chauncey; nay, not even Mr. Bragge himself, but all ignorant and illiterate Fellows. So that of these Four Witnesses Two were precluded, having long before given in the same Information, without mentioning any Cat. And the other Two have great reason to be suspected, having never so much as hinted that they saw any Cats before the Tryal, and being likewise those very Fellows that were Married

to the two Wenches some time after. And now I will leave the World to judge of Mr. Bragge's *Understanding* and *Modesty*, who could tell us, Page 24. *That he thought himself sufficient to prove even this* (meaning *Jane Wenham's* conversing with the Devil in the Shape of a Cat) *by two or three Witnesses.*

There remains now but one Circumstance more to be considered with relation to this Story. Mr. Bragge (in order to show, I suppose, that these Cats of his were mere Devils,) tells us, Page 17. *That Mr. Chauncy having a fair Opportunity to strike them, found himself not able to move his Arm.* The only Answer that I shall give to this, shall be by relating a Story, which Mr. Bragge has thought fit to conceal, not only by *passing it over in Silence*, but, what is much worse, by *misrepresenting it.* Page 20. he gives us an Account of Mrs. Gardiner's leaving her House upon the 17th of February, because, as he said, *she despaired of her Maid's Life, and was tired out with Grief and Fatigue, and was no longer able to endure such sad Sights.* Mr. Bragge had indeed some Reason to conceal the Truth here; for had it been told it would have destroyed *Anne Thorne's* Evidence, by showing how far wiser People than she, are subject to the Power of Imagination in these Cases. The Story, as I have had it credibly reported to me, is this.

Mrs. Gardiner being tired with watching for the *crooked Pins*, (the Story of which you have P. 19, 20.) left the Company, and went into the Parlour to drink a Dish of Tea with her Husband and a young Lady, who was then in the House with her. When the Tea was brought in, she sent to Mr. Chauncy to know if he would drink a Dish with her. He came to her; and the young Lady thinking she observed some Disorder in Mr. Chauncy, said to Mrs. Gardiner, Don't you think Mr. Chauncy looks very-Ill? Upon which Mrs. Gardiner asked him how he found himself? He said, Pretty well; but left the Room, and immediately sent for Mr. Gardiner to come to him, and told him, that he was in such a

Condi-

Condition, as he never was in before in all his Life, and could not tell but it was his Turn to suffer. Mr. Gardiner sent for his Wife, and she guessing at his Case, sent for a Bottle of Brandy ; and as the Bottle lost its Spirits, Mr. Chauncy recovered his. In the mean time, the young Lady, who was left alone, began to find a Roaming in her Head too. For it seems Mrs. Gardiner's Daughter (who had the keeping of the *Inchanted Pins*, and was called away by her Mother) had left the Pins in the Lady's Hands ; which began to work immediately ; and when Mrs. Gardiner returned, she found her in a Swoon upon the Floor. Her likewise Mrs. Gardiner recovered by the help of burnt Feathers, and such common Remedies. But no sooner was she well awake, but she swooned a second time, and was with more Difficulty recovered. These were the sad Sight, which Mrs. Gardiner could no longer bear ; and though her Courage had hitherto held out beyond them all, she thought it was time to leave her Quarters, when she found the whole Family running Mad. And now Mr. Bragge may make what Advantage he pleases of Mr. Chauncy's not being able to strike his Cats.

I had like to have forgotten one Story of the Cats, which I should have been very loth to have done, it being so good a Specimen of Mr. Bragge's exactness. He tells us, Page 22. of Mr. Chauncy's killing a Cat that knocked at the Door. All that we can reasonably gather from which, is, That Mr. Chauncy hearing a Noise at the Door, went out to see what was the Matter, and finding no-body there but a poor Cat, fell into a Passion, and knockt it o'th' Head. Mr. Bragge, I suppose, mention'd the Circumstance of her knocking, as an Argument that this Cat was a Fiend come upon Mother Wenham's Errand ; but he ought at least to have offer'd at one Proof to show that she did knock, and not contented himself barely with saying so. Whether a Man ought to be charged with Folly or Impudence, who writes after this fashion, I do not say ; Be the Reason what it will,
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it deserves I think to be marked out as something very extraordinary.

And now we have done with the Story of the *Cats*, which I suppose the Reader has observed to be one of the most wretched Arguments that ever was thought of to support a Charge of *Witchcraft*. Here is not so much as one Proof that can show, that there was any thing more in this whole Story, than *That at the time of Anne Thorne's Illness, a Number of Cats were seen and heard to squeak, and make a Disturbance, about Mr. Gardiner's House*. But this is not all the Weakness and Absurdity, that is to be observed here; for admitting all to be true that has been said and sworn to, *viz. That there were really Cats seen with Jane Wenham's Face, and heard to speak*: Admitting, I say, all this, I would yet desire to be informed, how all this proves any *Witchcraft* upon *Jane Wenham*. The speaking of the *Cats*, I suppose, will not be insisted upon, because other Folks are able to speak besides *Jane Wenham*; Their appearing with her Face, is the thing, which, if any can, must do the business. I will not here stay to enquire, whether the Persons who saw these *Cats*, had so much skill in *Physiognomy*, as to be able to distinguish, at a Glance, the Face of *Jane Wenham* from that of any other Old Woman; because I have in my Supposition admitted it to be true, that these *Cats* were seen with the Face of *Jane Wenham*: But then I must ask how the *Devils*, appearing in the Shape of a Cat, with *Jane Wenham's* Face, is an Argument to show, that she is a *Witch*. I see no Connexion that there is between, the *Devil's* appearing in her Shape, and her making any League or Contract with him. If the *Devil* is able to take *Jane Wenham's* Shape upon him, it is likely he is able to take upon him whose Shape he pleases; and if so, I am, I must confess, not so well skilled in these Matters as to be able to say, upon what Terms he is pleased to do so; and therefore cannot assure my self, but he may appear in the Shape of any
innocent

innocent Person, if he sees fit. If Mr. Bragge thinks otherwise, I do insist upon it, that he would demonstrate to me, *That the Devil never made use of his Shape to promote any ill Design.*

The next remarkable Story is that of the Pins ; which, I must confess, were it as clearly P. 19. proved in all its Circumstances, as it is confidently asserted, I should look upon to be something very extraordinary. That there were great Numbers of Pins seen in the Maid's Hands, we cannot reasonably question, it being a thing so very well attested : But as to the Means by which they are said to be convey'd thither, in this (I must confess) the Relation does not so well satisfy me. Mr. Chauncy says, *That a Pin came into her Fingers he knows not how ;* and that I think may very well be, and *Anne Thorne* not be bewitched neither. But he says further, *That she pluck'd a Pin out no where, nor had it in her Hands before.* But how does he know all this ? Why, I suppose, because he did not see it. But is Mr. Chauncy so much of an *Argus*, that nothing could possibly be done, but that he must see it ? Mr. Bragge will say, perhaps, That he watch'd her so very narrowly, that he must of Necessity have seen these Pins, if she had any. But what was it he watch'd her for, I would fain know ? Why, without doubt, to see that she might not slip any Pins into her Hands sily. Did therefore Mr. Chauncy know, that there would afterwards be Pins found in her Hands ? No, this could not be ; for this is the first time we read of any Pins ; and it is therefore likely, that he did not think of any, unless he himself were a *Conjurer*. There was then no manner of Reason in the World, why Mr. Chauncy should watch this Maid so very narrowly : Neither, after all, do I find by this Relation, that he was so very exact in his Observation, as that he could be able to say with so much Assurance, that *she plucked this Pin out no where, nor had it in her Hands before.* Did he observe all her Motions for an Hour, 2, or 3 together ?

ther? Did he open all her Fingers severally, before this Pin appear'd? He does not, he cannot say all this; and therefore I think Mr. *Chauncy's* Evidence about these Pins, is less worth than the Pins themselves. But then, to put the Matter beyond Dispute, we are told, that the Day following being in another of her Fits, she was seen to have more Pins; *altho', at the same time, Care was taken that not so much as a Pin was in any of her Cloaths.* This I very much doubt. For after all the Care that was taken about this Matter, it is very possible she might notwithstanding have Pins in her Cloaths, where they might not be able to find them. But supposing she had none in any of her Cloaths; is Mr. *Bragge* assur'd she had none any where else? Was the *Chair*, or *Bed* whereon she sat, so carefully examined, that it can positively be said there was none there? And is Mr. *Bragge* sure that there was none of the *By-standers*, who had any Design of Imposing upon the World, and who did not secretly convey these Pins to her? These, and several Questions may be ask'd, and ought to be resolv'd, before we can determine our selves upon the present Case. These Mr. *Bragge* has taken no notice of: And if I may speak what I think, I believe they are such as he cannot answer; and therefore he must excuse me if I cannot, upon such an imperfect Story as this, be immediately brought to close in with his Opinion. But he says further still, *That the Girl's Hands were pinnion'd; and that even then she seemed to receive and swallow something.* That, I think, she might do, and yet neither receive nor swallow any thing at all. Had there been Two or Three Credible Witnesses, that had seen these Pins come *dancing in the Air*, and *jumping into her Mouth*, this indeed would have something startled me. But I do not find by Mr. *Bragge*, that any Pins were ever seen *in the Air* at all; nay, not *in her Mouth*, after her Hands were pinnion'd. He says indeed, that *George Chapman* clapp'd his Hand before the *Maid's Mouth*, and felt one striking against his Hand. But feeling and seeing are

Two different Things. Did he see it, I ask; and know it was a Pin? No, he did not; (as I had it from his own Mouth) Neither is he certain whether it was a Pin or no: Something he did feel; but whether it were a *Pin*, or any thing else, he cannot affirm.

I have said as much as I think necessary to be said upon this Subject. After which I must again own, that was every Circumstance of this Story so clearly made out, as it is necessary it should, before it ought to be believed, I should look upon it to be a thing very extraordinary. But I cannot here be without some suspicion of Cheat and Imposture: It is a Matter of a very various and complicated Nature, and there are so many Circumstances wanting in the Relation, that the most I can at present do for Mr. *Bragge* is to suspend my Faith concerning it.

But if it should now be granted, that these *Pins* were conveyed to *Anne Thorne* by the power of some evil Spirit, I believe it would yet be very difficult to find any thing in this Instance, which would be sufficient to prove *Witchcraft* upon *Jane Wenham*. All that can here be pretended in order to this is, *That it was taken notice of by Two Men who sat up with her, that in P. 20. the Evening she pull'd out her Pincushion which was full of Pins, and that in the Morning when she produc'd it again they were all gone; and that she wanted a Pin to pin up her Gown.* Now not to dispute here whether this be a sufficient proof, that those *Pins* which *Anne Thorne* was seen to have were the very same *Pins* that came off *Jane Wenham's* Cushion, (which yet may very reasonably be demanded) Not to dispute this I say, I would only desire to be inform'd of Mr. *Bragge* how it follows, That because the Devil took *Pins* off *Jane Wenham's* Cushion and brought them to *Anne Thorne*, how, I say, it follows from hence, that *Jane Wenham* had made any *League* or *Contract* with him? If the Devil was so dextrous as to put *Pins* into *Anne Thorne's* Hands after so secret and invisible a manner, as Mr. *Bragge* supposes, it is not I think

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much

much to be question'd but he could by the same *secret* and *invisible* manner take them away from *Jane Wenham*; and I do not take the Devil's *Conscience* to be so very *squeamish*, as that he can think himself obliged, when he is in want of a few Pins, to ask any one leave where to get them.

The Story of the *Bottle of Urine* comes next P. 20. in order, which because it deserves no better than to be soundly banter'd, I shall leave to be answer'd by those who are more merrily disposed than I am at present. All that I shall remark concerning it is, that if they had a mind to have made the World believe, that there was any thing wonderful in this *Experiment*, they ought to have repeated it several times, and to have seen whether or no the same *Effect* always followed. For as the Story stands at present it is but one single Instance, and of consequence will prove nothing at all.

We are now come to the Story of the *Feathers*, which Mr. Bragge is pleased to call a *Discovery more surprising than any thing that has been yet related*. He P. 22. tells us in the first Place, that the Pillow in which these *Cakes of Feathers* were found, was stuffed with Down not long before by Mrs. Gardiner's own Hand. This, I suppose, he informed us of, to make it appear a thing incredible, that any Feathers should come there at all. But is it possible, that Mr. Bragge should have been so very ignorant in these Matters, as not to have known, that that which is generally called *Down*, is nothing else but a mixture of the smallest sort of *Feathers* with *Down properly so called*; so that since Mr. Bragge's *Cakes* were, according to his own confession, made up of *small Feathers*, it will be easy upon this Supposition to find out Materials enough for them without the power of *Witchcraft*. Well! But besides these *Feathers*, here was it seems a *viscous Matter*, which would stretch Se-

ven or Eight Inches in a fine Thread before it broke,
 by which they were cemented together into P. 27.
 these Cakes; and this Mr. Bragge tells us puts him
 in mind of that Oyntment made of dead Men's Flesh, P. 35.
 which Mr. Glanville mentions as often used by Witch-
 es. We are obliged to him here that he was only put in
 mind of this, and that he did not say, this viscous matter
 was the very same with Mr. Glanville's Oyntment. But I
 am apt to fancy, that unless he had resolved that Mr.
 Glanville should say something on his side, he would
 much sooner have been put in mind of a little Pitch or
 Shoemaker's-Wax than of this Oyntment. I never yet
 heard of any Oyntment that would stretch Seven or Eight
 Inches in a fine Thread before it broke, tho' I cannot say
 what sort of Stuff may be made by Conjurers. I wish
 Mr. Bragge would have been so kind as to have mark'd
 down the Page in Mr. Glanville where this Oyntment is
 to be met with, that we might have seen his skill at
 Analogy. But, perhaps he thought every Body trou-
 bled their Heads as much about Witches and Wizards as
 he has done of late. But whatever Mr. Glanville's Oynt-
 ment may be, that he should be thus forward to think
 of it; I fancy that had he spent half so much time
 in studying Nature, as he has done in ransacking into
 Books of Witchcraft, he would have found no occasion to
 have run to Mr. Glanville, or any one else, for a Solution
 of this strange Appearance. It is plain, that there is in all
 Feathers whatsoever, besides their proper Nourishment,
 a kind of viscous matter, which serves to fasten them
 the more strongly in their proper Sockets; and therefore
 it is natural enough to suppose, that this gradually ouz-
 ing out of the Feathers might in time be collected toge-
 ther in such a quantity, as to form that viscous Substance
 which Mr. Bragge speaks of. However, from the order
 in which these Feathers are placed, Mr. Bragge con-
 cludes them to be some Devilish Enchantment: but the
 Reasons upon which he builds this Conclusion are so
 very peculiar to himself, that I desire the Reader would

give himself the trouble of considering them. He tells us P. 34. That unless these Cakes be supposed to be some *Devilish Enchantment*, no account can possibly be given how they should come there; and that it is really strange that the Feathers should be so closely knit together, and ranked in such an exact *Mathematical Order*; which Argument when reduc'd to Syllogism will stand thus;

Every Thing that is not to be accounted for, must of necessity be done by Witchcraft.

These Cakes of Feathers are not to be accounted for : Ergo-----

The Minor is proved thus :

Every Thing that Mr. Bragge cannot give a Reason of, is not to be accounted for.

Mr. Bragge cannot give any Reason of these Cakes of Feathers : Ergo-----

Now, is not this (think you) a very notable Argument? Does not he plainly make Human Wisdom the Measure of Natural Powers, and his own Knowledge the Standard of Human Wisdom? If I may be allowed to argue after this Fashion, I can write Books of Witchcraft as well as he. Nay, if this be good Reasoning, I will undertake to prove, that his Hand, when he wrote his *Narrative*, was moved by *Sorcery*. But since Mr. Bragge looks upon this to be a thing so very unaccountable, I will venture being call'd a Fool for once, and try what I can do towards the Explaining this dark *Mystery*.

I told you before, that there was in all *Feathers*, besides their proper Nourishment, a sort of *glutinous Matter*, which served to fix them in their proper Sockets, and which I supposed to be that *Viscous Substance* by which these Cakes were cemented. Now it is no way unlikely, that this Humour ouzing (as I said before) out of the Ends of these small Feathers, might, by a
sort

sort of *Magnetism* or *Electricity*, mutually attract each other, and so be brought into that regular Form in which they were found. Mr. *Bragge* may possibly look upon the Words *Attraction*, *Magnetism*, and *Electricity*, to be *Magical* Terms; and think, that I am now with him, going to *conjure* these Feathers together into Cakes: But it is very likely that the Reader may be of another Opinion, as knowing that I speak such Language as every *Babe in Philosophy* understands. This attractive Force is visible enough in *Glass*, *Jett*, &c. but particularly in *Amber*, from whence the Word *Electricity* has its Rise; and I cannot say how far this viscous Matter, that is found in Feathers, may partake of the Nature of these Bodies; and whether it may not be endued with a greater Degree of *Magnetism*, than any of them all. From this Supposition then, it will be very easy to give a Rational Account of every Circumstance relating to these Cakes of Feathers. For first, it follows from hence, that the Quills Ends of the Feathers must of Necessity meet in the Center, and the Feathers therefore make up the *Radij* of that Circle which they compose. For this viscous Matter oozing out of the Quills Ends, the Quills Ends will therefore be alone endued with this Magnetick Force, and consequently, will mutually attract each other, and meet together in the very Form which we now speak of.

The greatest Difficulty here is, how these Feathers should be exactly the same in Number in every *Cake*. But to this, perhaps, it may not be amiss to say, that the Feathers being all of them pretty much of the same Magnitude, it does of Necessity require the same Number of them to compose a Circle: And therefore, since we must suppose this *attractive Force* to be uniform in its Action, it must therefore attract till no more can be attracted; *i. e.* till the Center is filled up, or, in other Words, till the same Number of Feathers is attracted together in every *Cake*. If this viscous Matter be en-

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dued with a Power of attracting Feathers, it is easy to understand how these Quill Ends should each of them attract Hairs, or any such small and solid Bodies about them, before they were attracted to one another. Here therefore we have, in the last place, an Account of those short Hairs, black and grey, which Mr. Bragge found matted together in the Center of this *viscous Matter*. He is willing to suppose these to be *Cats Hair*; but my Argument would be every whit as good as his, if I should barely say, *I suppose the contrary*. But I do not content my self with *barely saying so*; there being a very good Reason to be given, to show the Vanity of Mr. Bragge's Notion. It is known, that most, if not all *Fowls*, have such Hairs as are here spoken of; and that these are pluck'd off in considerable Quantities, along with the *Down* and *Feathers*: Why therefore Mr. Bragge should not think of these, (or fifty other Sorts of Hair, which might accidentally be mixed amongst the Down) as well as of *Cats Hair*, is what I can see no manner of Reason for; unless he had a mind to give Credit to his Story of *these Cats speaking*. It is very likely he might have this in his Head: And he who considers well of his way of Reasoning, will not perhaps find it hard to imagine he might lay some Stress upon it. He might perhaps think, that the Court had entertain'd such an Opinion of his *Understanding*, as that his *bare Supposition* might weigh as much with them, as another Man's *positive Knowledge*.

Thus far I have endeavour'd to give an Account of these *Cakes of Feathers*, both as to the manner of their coming into these Pillows, and as to the Form and Order in which these Feathers were placed. Mr. Bragge perhaps will give this no better Name than *Chance* (as he is wont to do to every thing that is neither Witchcraft, nor what he understands) and say, That it is as *inconceivable to him how this should be*, as that the 24 Letters of the Alphabet should by mere Accident fall into one of the Verses of Horace. If he had said the same thing with Rela-

tion

tion to his own Narrative, I might have allowed of what he says without doing my self much Damage---. But to go on. I can for the Readers Satisfaction assure him, that this Account is more than pure Speculation, since Experience tells us, that it is a very common thing for Feathers to *mat* after some such Fashion as this, if they be not well dried before they are put into *Beds, Pillows, &c.* And for this Reason it is (as I am told by those who understand these Matters) that they usually *bake* their Feathers before they apply them to these Purposes, that so by drawing out all this *Viscous Moisture*, they may prevent them from running into these *Heaps, Cakes,* or whatever you will call them. But yet after all these Attempts that I have made to give a natural Solution of the Manner by which these Cakes of Feathers were collected together, I must be so ingenuous as to let the Reader know, that had I a sufficient Proof that this Story is exactly true in all its Circumstances, I should not look upon it as a thing wholly *unsurprizing*.

But it is here to be observed, that we have only Mr. *Bragge's* Evidence to support the most considerable of them, which for some Reasons I shall hint at by and by, I do not think my self obliged so much to rely upon. Mr. *Chauncy* indeed *saw* these Cakes of Feathers, and so it is likely might several others; but as to the *Structure and Composition* of them (which is the only Thing that can be wondred at) that depends *entirely* upon Mr. *Bragge's* Authority. Mr. *Chauncy* did in Court *just mention* these Feathers, and referred himself for a further Account to Mr. *Bragge*; which by the by wou'd have been but a very odd way of proceeding, if Mr. *Chauncy* had known any thing more of the Matter. For his Business there was not only to *tell the Judge a Story*: If that had been all, it might have been proper enough to have referred himself to Mr. *Bragge*, as being perhaps the better Spokesman of the Two; but he was called as an *Evidence* to attest the Truth, so far as he

he could, of the Facts there related ; and therefore shou'd have said what he had known, if he did know any thing more, and not to have left it wholly to Mr. *Bragge* ; for by this means the Credit of this Story, which wou'd then have been supported by Two Witnesses, stands now upon the single Authority of one. It is therefore my Opinion, that the true Reason why Mr. *Chauncy* said no more of these Feathers, was, because he knew no more ; so that we must now rely upon Mr. *Bragge* for the Truth of this Story, which I must confess, I am not very inclinable to do. The Reader may perhaps be apt to think I am not so fair as I ought to be, and I doubt not but Mr. *Bragge* will be very angry that I will not believe him : But when he has made out the Truth of his *Portsmouth Story*, I will then acknowledge my Fault, and ask his Pardon. Mr. *Bragge* understands very well what I mean, and knows that if it be true, it is a thing upon *Record*, and so, easily proved ; and therefore I shall content my self with giving him this Hint, being unwilling to expose him too much to the World. All that I shall say further upon this Story, is, that I could heartily have wished that some of these Feathers had been preserved ; it might have been perhaps more to Mr. *Bragge's* Credit, and I am sure much more to the Satisfaction of others. The Judge wished he could have seen them ; and I think his Desire was reasonable : For it was but just, to demand the Feathers to support the Evidence, or else to send the Evidence after the Feathers.

I shall conclude this Head only with observing, That here is nothing in all this Story of the Feathers, which (supposing as Mr. *Bragge* would have it, that they were some devilish Inchantment) does afford the least shadow of Proof, that *Jane Wenham* was concerned in it.

But we are now come to a Story which, of all others, seems to bid the fairest for proving *Anne Thorne's* Disorders to be something more than Natural. Page 30. we are told, That soon after she was returned from the As-

sises,

sizes, on the 5th of *March* at Night, she had a terrible Fit, and was oftentimes *sadly pinched, in the Breast, and other Parts of the Body.* And to show that this was neither Fancy nor Falshood, we are further informed, that *there were visible Marks of these Pinches remaining upon her Body several Days after.* Now it may here be enquired, how it came to pass, that this poor Maid should be so *dismally pinched.* For admitting that every other Symptom might be purely Natural, yet this *Pinching* may seem to be so uncommon and unheard-of a thing in any natural Distemper, as to be wholly unresolvable into natural Causes.

But now with regard to this Story. Here are again several Things very material to be enquired into, and whereof I find no manner of Account in Mr. B's Relation. And, in the first Place, I think it may reasonably enough be moved, Whether or no this *Anne Thorne* were in Bed, or in her Cloaths, when she complained of this Pinching. The Story does not positively and clearly determine this, but there are some Circumstances in it (such as it being done in the *Night*, and it being said of some Persons that *they stood by her Bed-side*) which do pretty much incline me to believe the former. Now if this be the Case, it is very possible that this Wench might pinch *her self*, at the very time she complained of this Pinching, without any body's being able to take any Notice of it. But admitting that she was in her Cloaths, and so not capable of doing all this, can any body be assured that she was pinched actually at the same time that she complained? Was her Body carefully searched? and is it certain that she had none of these Marks about her before these Complaints? If not (as it is very likely) might she not then pinch or disfigure her self by some other means, some time before, when she had an Opportunity, and afterwards feign her self to be pinched? Or might not these Marks be the Effect of some *natural Distemper*, and barely such (I mean without any Pain attending them) which she might afterwards appeal to,

to make her Impostures the more credible? Either of these may be supposed; nor do I here find any thing that makes it any ways unlikely, unless it be, that *these Marks always appeared fresh after her Complaining*. But this is of no Force, because some Marks will appear fresh for a long time; and I do not think it possible for any one barely, upon the Inspection of such a Mark as Mr. Bragge speaks of, to say precisely the Time when it was done. So that I see nothing of Contradiction here, to suppose either that these were *bare Marks* arising from pure natural Causes, and designedly made use of to support and give credit to this Story of her being pinched; or that the Girl might be all this while *her own Tormentor*. To this latter indeed it may be said, That it seems a thing unnatural for Persons to put themselves voluntarily to so much Pain and Torture. But I do not say it was done voluntarily; she might be a little besides her self perhaps when she did it. Besides, if she were not, I cannot tell what Motive she might have to play the *Impostor*; perhaps it was so much for her Interest to act her Part well, as to make her abundant Recompence for any Uneasinesses of that Nature.

But if yet it cannot be admitted that this Girl had any Trick or Design in her Head, but that it was something real, and in which she was purely Passive: It may, after all this Noise of outward Marks and Signs, be very reasonably questioned, whether or no she was *truly and properly* pinched. The Maid does not say that she *saw* any one pinch her; and therefore the most that can be said is this, *That the Girl often felt a Sensation in several Parts of her Body, like that which is occasioned by Pinching; i. e. a quick and transient Pain in some Part, which, it seems, was followed by the same redness, blackness, &c. which are usually seen upon such Occasions.* But now what is here in all this which may not be occasioned by some sudden Contractions or Twitchings of the Fibres of those Parts, and a Stagnation of the Blood and Humours consequent thereupon? It is evident, that Pain,
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and all other Sensations, are (so far as our Bodies are concerned in them) nothing more than a certain and peculiar Motion of the sensible Organs; and that external Objects affect us for no other Reason, than because they are fitted or disposed to move the Parts of our Bodies after this or that peculiar manner. From whence it follows, that the Concurrence of these external Objects, to the raising of these Sensations in us, is purely Accidental, (*i. e.* not necessary) and that the same Sensation will always follow the same Motion of the Organ, by what Force soever that Organ may be supposed to be moved. Now if this be the Case, why may not some *internal* and *natural* Cause, by exciting such a kind of Motion in the sensible Parts of this Woman's Body, as is usually raised upon Pinching, raise the very same Sensation in her *as if she were*, and make her believe that *she really was*, pinched? I cannot see any thing absurd in all this. But because this may be imagined to be no more than pure Speculation, I would desire the Reader to observe what the Judicious Dr. Sydenham has taught us concerning the *Hysterical Illness*. He tells us, that it is frequent in Distempers of this kind, for the Spirits to *concenter themselves from all Parts of the Body, in a certain Point of the Pericranium, and to cause such a sharp and piercing Pain, as if a Nail were driven into the Skull*. Which Solution he handsomely enough illustrates by the Comparison of a Burning-glass; where, *as the Rays of Light acting with an united Force, burn with the greater strength and quickness; so in this Case, the Spirits rushing impetuously altogether into one Part, do make a more quick and violent Divulsion of the sensible Membranes*. Now, I say, if the Spirits by these irregular and tumultuous Motion into the Head, can cause the same, or much such sort of, Pain, as if a Nail were driven into that Part, purely by giving such a peculiar Motion to those Fibres; Why may not they, rushing upon any other Part, with another kind of Motion, raise also the Sensation of Nipping or

Differt. Epistol.
ad Gul. Cole, p.
104, 126.

Pinching, by the Means of the same internal Causes.

But that this is a thing *very possible*, we can no way so well prove as by shewing that *it is in Fact true*. And this I think we may in some Measure do from the *Observations* of the above-mentioned Author.

P. 108, 109. For in the same Dissertation he tells us, That this Distemper (meaning the *Hysterical Illness*) is apt *not only to affect the Internal Parts, but also the External, viz. the Muscular Flesh, especially the Shoulders, Hands, Legs, and Thighs, causing sometimes a Pain, and sometimes a Swelling upon the Part affected*. He tells us further, that *these Pains do leave behind them such a Tenderness upon the Skin, as will hardly endure the Touch, just as if the Flesh had been beaten*.

All this we learn from this *Sagacious and Accurate Physician*; and it is what the daily Experience and Observation of others do abundantly confirm. And now I wou'd desire Mr. Bragge to consider a little, how much this differs from the *Pinching*, whereof we are now speaking. It is, I think, *at least* evident from hence, that Nature is able to go a great way in producing such Effects, which, if if we did not daily observe them, wou'd appear to us to be very wonderful; and although I cannot say that these Two Cases are *exactly* alike in all Circumstances, yet their Features bear so great a Likeness to each other, that we may reasonably enough suppose them to be Children of the same Parent. It is not necessary that they should be *exactly* the same in all Respects; it is sufficient for my Purpose, if any thing in Nature can be met with, that bears *any Resemblance* to the Case now before us: And if this be here granted me, as I think it cannot reasonably be denied me, those Difficulties, which may arise from some small Differences between them, will be of no Moment: For it is by no means hard to be conceived, how Nature should often vary in the Methods of her operating in Human

Human Bodies ; and that the same Distemper shou'd appear under different Faces, according to the Difference of the Subjects upon which it resides. This is all that I have to say concerning this Matter, taking it for granted that the Reader has already observed, that there is nothing at all in it, which has any Relation to *Fane Wenham*.

There is now but one Story more, which remains to be consider'd ; and that is at P. 31. where we are told, *That a certain Woman accidentally clapping her Hand against the Bed's Head, immediately received Three Blows upon the Palm of her Hand, &c.* It is not said here who this Woman was, that we can tell whether or no she is to be believed, or not too much given to Fancy and Whimsy. It might be the Lady that swooned away at the taking of the Pins, for any thing Mr. Bragge has told us, unless his saying, that *She was one that had but little Faith in these Matters*, argues any thing to the contrary. But supposing it was somebody else, and that she was one who formerly had no great Faith in Things of this Nature, I do not know how much her Faith might have been improved by those many strange Appearances that had lately hapned, nor whether her Imagination might not by this time have been wrought up to such a Pitch, as wou'd enable her to feel whatsoever she pleased : But I can say but little to this, for Want of a more explicit Knowledge of the Person here spoken of, the Circumstances she was then in, and the Manner of her receiving this Blow ; and therefore I shall not pretend to give any Account for it, but shall leave it as I find it.

And now *I have likewise done with the Story of this unhappy Maid* : In examining which I have, I hope, passed by nothing that is material enough to be considered. There are however some Circumstances of a more general Nature, which frequently occur throughout this whole Narrative ; and which therefore to avoid Repetition, I designedly reserved to be considered by themselves. And to these I now betake my self, and shall

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in the handling them, according to the Method first laid down, consider what Foundation there is in them to build this Opinion of *Witchcraft* on, and also the Reasons they afford to charge this *Witchcraft* particularly upon *Jane Wenham*.

The First that I shall take notice of, is that of *Anne Thorne's* being so frequently recovered out of her Fits by Prayer, which, Mr. *Bragge* says, is *so great an Argument of their being immediately inflicted upon her by Evil Spirits*. With regard to which I must beg leave to enquire,

I. Whether or no it be so certain as Mr. *Bragge* supposes, that she was ever recovered out of any Fit at all by these Means? This is a Question which perhaps Mr. *Bragge* may not think so modestly put, after the Thing has been attested upon so many Experiments, and upon such good Authority. But I do here declare, that I do not in the least call in Question the Credit of those Persons who have attested these Things: I do verily believe them to be Persons of Integrity; and do not make any doubt at all, but that *Anne Thorne* was, according to all Appearance, recover'd out of many Fits by the Method Mr. *Bragge* speaks of. But then withal, I think it may reasonably enough be doubted, whether or no she did not very much impose upon those about her, by making a shew of some Disorders, which in themselves were really none. I do not say, that all her Fits were no more than Sham and Imposture; on the contrary, I do verily believe, and have all along supposed, that she did labour under some real Distemper: But then it does not necessarily follow, that all that she seemed to have, were of the same kind. *Anne Thorne* might (if she pleased) mix and intersperse several Counterfeits with her real Disorders; and this (we know) is no more than is common with all Deceivers, who imagine (and very justly too) that the most certain way to gain Credit to their Impostures, is to interweave them with something that is real and true. What is here said of Fits in general, may also be applied to the particular Sym-

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Symptoms of each Fit with relation to one another. For here too may be a Mixture of Truth and Falshood, of such Symptoms as are the Natural and Genuine Offspring of the Distemper it self, and of others which are no more than the Effects of turbulent and over-heated Imagination, or of something worse.

From these Observations, there naturally arises a very considerable Difficulty, which must be very well clear'd up, before we shall be able to come to any Determination of the Point between us; *viz.* How to distinguish between those Fits of *Anne Thorne* which are *true* and *real* Distempers, and those (if any there be of that kind) which are only *Cheat*, or the bare Delusions of *Fancy* and *Imagination*. Unless we can do this, all Disputes about *Anne Thorne's* being recovered out of her Fits by Prayer will be to very little purpose; because the very Terms of the Question will be without any certain and determinate Signification; it being one thing to be recovered out of a *true* Fit by Prayer, and another to be recovered out of a Disorder which is *counterfeited*, or at best but the *wild Delusions of a distemper'd Brain*. Now there is but one way that I can think of, which wou'd have settled this Point upon a clear Bottom, and put an End to all Disputes arising from it; and that is, To have observed, and carefully examined into every particular Symptom, that discovered it self at those times, when she was thus recovered by Prayers, and to have shown them to be such as did of Necessity argue the Fit to have been a true and proper Distemper. This, I say, wou'd have been the only way to have cleared up all these Difficulties, and to have render'd the Story plain and intelligible; and this, give me leave to tell Mr. *Bragge*, was what might reasonably have been expected from him, had he had any Regard to his own Credit, or the Readers Satisfaction. But instead of this, we find nothing but Darknes and Uncertainty; so little Exactness has been observed with relation to this particular, that I do here challenge him

to show so much as one Relation, where it is possible for any one to form a tolerable Judgment of that Fit from which she is said to have been recovered by Prayers. Pag. 12. Mr. Bragge tells us *she had a dismal Fit.* Pag. 15. that *she had several returns of her Fits.* Pag. 16. that *she was in a violent Fit.* Pag. 19. that *she had one Fit more.* Pag. 22. that *she continued to have her Fits, &c.* Now I would fain know what is any one the wiser for all this ? Or what could Mr. Bragge possibly propose to himself from this indistinct relation ? What could he imagine, that any one who reads this Narrative of his, should be capable of understanding, by his saying in general Terms only, *That the Maid was in a Fit in a violent Fit, &c.* The Word *Fit* is a very complex Term, and contains in it as many Notions almost as the Word *Distemper.* It signifies *precisely* nothing at all ; and therefore all that any Man can gather from hence is no more than this, *viz. That Anne Thorne was to all outward appearance in some disorder, out of which she was recovered by Prayer.* Had Mr. Bragge therefore a mind to have made the World believe, that there was any thing wonderful in all this, he ought to have set down the *particular Symptoms* of that Distemper which he calls a *Fit*, and out of which she was recovered by Prayer. At least, he should never have omitted such (if any there were) which gave demonstration that the Distemper was *true and real.* By this means, he would have given every one an opportunity of judging as well as himself, and thereby wholly discharged himself as a Relator. Whereas, by omitting such things as these, it looks as if he had not intended these Accounts *for the Information of understanding and judicious Men*, but only *to amuse the Ignorant*, who are ready enough to take things in gross. But to go on,

P. 11. we find Mr. Bragge something more exact, and giving us one Symptom of that grievous *Fit* which *Anne Thorne* is there said to have had upon her. But the misfortune is, it is such a one as will do him no manner of

of kindness ; he says here she was *Speechless*, (*i. e.* I suppose *without speech*) and so indeed it is said of her in some other Places. But before I can believe there is any thing strange in all this, I would first desire to know what Mr. Bragge understands by any Persons *being speechless* ? Is it, *not to speak because one cannot*, or *because one will not* ? If the latter, what wonder is it, that a Wench who designed to play the Cheat, and make People believe she was enchanted, should vouchsafe to open her Mouth when any one was praying by her ? But this perhaps is not Mr. Bragge's Notion of *being speechless*. She was *speechless* he says, *i. e.* (he ought to have said) *she could not speak*. But how does Mr. Bragge know all this ? Why for no other reason that I can see than *because she did not speak*. May not then a Person hold his Tongue and say nothing if he sees so fit ? Is it necessary that this Maid should never be silent, but when she could not be otherwise ? I have often heard, that Women-kind are much *given* to use their Tongues ; but I did not know till now, that it was *Essential to them* to be always prating. In plain Terms, the Tongue is so much at our own disposal as nothing more ; it may be used or not used, just as our Humours lead us. And therefore I think it is but a weak way of reasoning, to conclude, that because a Person who said nothing before, is observed to come to her Tongue immediately upon hearing any one at Prayers, that therefore she was recover'd by Prayers out of any true and real Distemper.

P. 6. We read, that besides her being *speechless* she had *strange Tremblings and Convulsions of the Body* ; but neither will all this in the least help him. For it is to be observed, that this was not one of those Fits out of which she was recovered by Prayer, neither do I find throughout this whole Book, that ever she was recovered from any Convulsions at all, by the means of Prayer : besides, if she were, we are all this while as much in the Dark as ever. For we are not told (which

we certainly ought to have been) upon what Parts of the Body these Convulsions were, and whether upon the Muscles that serve to *voluntary* or *involuntary* motions. If these Muscles which are here said to be convulsed, were under the Power and Regulation of the *Will*, there is nothing in Nature more easily counterfeited than these Convulsions ; and therefore till this be clearly decided, it is impossible for one to know what to believe concerning it. I do admire, that any Man of Sense and Judgment should thus confound and jumble things together, which ought so carefully to have been distinguished ! Surely, Mr. Bragge must have a very odd Notion of Mankind, to think any one would be persuaded to ground an Opinion upon so weak and uncertain a Foundation ! It would have been tolerable enough to have heard an *ignorant Mechanick*, or an *Old Woman* in a Chimney-corner *talking* at this rate ; but for a Philosopher, and one that sets up for an Historian too, to *write* after this lame and imperfect manner is what I think is hardly pardonable.

At P. 31. we have an account of another *Fit*, out of which she was recover'd by Prayer, and where Mr. Bragge has obliged us with an account of one *Symptom*. But here to countenance us a little, we have it seems the Opinion of a very able Physician, *that it might be no more than counterfeit*. But perhaps the Doctor's Opinion does not weigh much with Mr. Bragge, (tho' I perceive he can rely very much upon it, when it serves his turn) he is a perfect *Infidel*, he tells us, in these Cases, and therefore what he says he would have us suppose, not to be so *free* and *unprejudiced* as it ought to be. Besides, the Girl is now *sadly pinched*, which shews the Distemper to be something *real*. Well let this be so for once ; and will Mr. Bragge say, that she was recover'd out of this by Prayer ? Pray let him look back to P. 30. where he will find under his own Hand, *That although she was prayed by all that Day yet she was ever and anon most sadly pinch'd*. In this Case then, the only
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Symptom which could not be counterfeited, could not be removed by Prayer.

In short, there is but one Fit in this whole Book (besides those of her Running, and Leaping, after those uncommon Rates) but what may, for any thing Mr. *Bragge* has told us to the contrary, be pure Cheat and Imposture, and that is at P. 18. Here we are told, that *she was as cold as a dead Corpse, her Nose pinch'd, her Pulse and Breath gone.* Now the Motion of the Heart upon which all these Symptoms depend, is altogether *involuntary*, these therefore I grant could not be counterfeited. If therefore she can be recovered out of this Fit by Prayer, I will say not one Word more, but freely grant the thing that Mr. *Bragge* desires. But now what an unlucky Accident is this? This, which is the only Instance that could have done Mr. *Bragge* any service, bears directly against him. Here it seems Prayers are of no manner of Service, neither is it possible to recover her, till *Jane Wenham* by coming in *unties the Incantment.* But of that by and by.

By this time I hope Mr. *Bragge* is somewhat sensible that I was not so unreasonably scrupulous when I put the Question, *Whether or no it was so certain as he pretends, that Anne Thorne was really recovered out of any Fit by Prayer?* For, after all this Noise and Bustle that has been made about it, it does not appear that ever she was (I mean, out of such Fits, as were true and real Distempers). And I must here beg leave to observe, That the Methods then taken were not likely to bring this Matter to a fair Determination. For these Prayers were always used in the *Hearing and Presence* of the Girl, P. 10. (for, it seems, *she was all along very sensible*) and this gave her all the Scope imaginable to play the Cheat, if she had any Inclinations so to do. Whereas had these Persons prayed by themselves, in a private Room, so that she could not have had the least Knowledge or Intimation of it, this would have prevented

all Counterfeit in the Maid her self, and cut off all Suspicion of it in others. Whether or no Prayers offered up to God after this manner, are less effectual than those which are offer'd up in the Sick Person's Presence, is not my Business to determine. Thus much is certain, That if the Maid had recovered so many times together, when she was prayed for in private, this would have been a strong Proof, that there was something in her Case more than ordinary. But her Recovering upon being pray'd for in her own Presence, does by no means prove thus much; (unless it be first shown that her Fits were real) because she being so sensible of what was doing, might easily come out of them at that time, if they were no more than Counterfeit. But,

2. Because I promised to deal very fairly, I will now grant all that Mr. Bragge would have, and (for Argument-sake) suppose that *Anne Thorne* was recover'd out of *real Fits*, by the Methods whereof we are now speaking. For even this being admitted, I can by no means see, how it is so convincing a Proof as Mr. Bragge pretends, That these Fits *were immediately inflicted by evil Spirits*. He tells us, indeed, (to prove this) *That our Saviour has prescribed Prayer, as the best Remedy against the Power and Malice of Satan; That there is great Force in it, to drive out evil Spirits; and that our Saviour and his Apostles cast out many Devils by that means* All this is very true, but nothing at all to his Purpose. For it is but an odd way of Arguing, to say, *That because Devils may be cast out by the Force of Prayer, that therefore all Curing of Distempers by this means, is Casting out Devils*. If indeed our Saviour had told us, that Prayer was effectual in Curing such Distempers *only* as are inflicted by Evil Spirits, then Mr. Bragge's Argument would have been strong and good: But to this we are told the contrary. For the Apostle St. James advises, *Jam. 5. 14, 15. That if any man be sick, he should call together the Elders of*

of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with Oyl in the Name of the Lord : And then promises, That the Prayer of Faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up. It is not here said, If any Man be bewitched among you, or be possessed with an Evil Spirit ; but if any man be sick ; meaning all Sorts of Distempers whatsoever. And it is, I think, beyond Dispute, that it was frequent, not only in the Times of Christ and his Apostles, but for many Years after, for Bishops of the Church to cure many Natural Distempers by this means. So that *Anne Thorne's* being recover'd out of her Fits by Prayer, is every whit as good an Argument to prove her Distemper to be Natural, as it is to prove it inflicted by an Evil Spirit ; and for this very Reason it is an Argument for neither. All that it proves (if it be true) is, *That God has not yet wholly withdrawn this miraculous Power of Curing Diseases, from his Ministers* ; but as to the Nature of the Distemper which is thus cured, it is no manner of an Argument, either one way or the other.

But we are now come to another Consideration, which seems not only to be an Argument of Witchcraft, but which does also seem to affix this Witchcraft upon *Jane Wenham* ; and that is, *the Recovery of Anne Thorne out of her Fits immediately upon Jane Wenham's coming to her*. But here again Mr. Bragge, according to his peculiar Way of relating, has told us only in general Terms, *that she was in a Fit* ; or if he has attempted at any time to describe these Fits to us, it is done with so little Care and Exactness, that it is impossible that any one should be able to form any certain Judgment concerning them. We are told *that she was speechless ; that her Eyes were shut ; that she seemed to be in great Misery and Torture, in a Swoon, Dead, and the like*. Now what any Man is able to gather from all this (unless he is able to conjure,) I cannot for my part imagine. What, I would
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P. 9, 10, 11,
12, 17.

fain know, did Mr. Bragge see in *Anne Thorne* at that time, which made him think *she was in a Swoon, or Dead?* What *Symptoms* were then upon her, that we may be assured, these fainting Fits, which she *seemed* to be in, were *truly* and *properly* such? I am not able to guess what Mr. Bragge means by *seeming to be Dead*, or *seeming to be in a Swoon*, any more than that he and perhaps the rest of the Persons about her, thought her to be so: But how far *his*, or *their* Judgments, are to be relied upon in this Case, depends upon something that I know nothing of, I mean *their Skill in those Matters*, and *the Care and Exactness that were made use of in examining into every particular Circumstance of her Disorder*. And therefore, till I have better Information about these things, I cannot avoid being in the same Doubt that I was in with relation to the former Story; *viz.* Whether ever she was recovered out of any Fits at all by *Jane Wenham's* coming to her. The Story indeed that is mentioned *Page 18.* may perhaps seem to put this Matter beyond dispute. This I observed before, and acknowledge now, must be supposed to be some *real Distemper*; and yet it is here said, *that she was recovered at the sight of Jane Wenham*. But I observe here, that since it does not appear that any other of her Fits were of the same Nature, this comes now to be considered *as one single Case*, which (because it may be no more than Accident) in my humble Opinion is not sufficient to justify this Charge of *Witchcraft*. If she had never recovered *but this one time*, I dare say no body would have been so rash and foolishly credulous, as to have thought it a good Argument to fix this *Witchcraft* upon *Jane Wenham*. But if the other Fits were not real Distempers, this will then be truly the Case: This Story will then stand alone, and the Force of the others which should *support and establish* it, will be entirely lost.

But I need not insist upon this Argument, since Mr. Bragge himself has unluckily put one much better into my Hand. He has given us an Account of a certain Person

Person, who was supposed to have been *bewitched*, and who also was recovered out of her Fits by the Touch of her, who was thought to have been the Person that had *bewitched* her. But an ingenious Person being there present, and objecting, it seems, that this Experiment was not sufficient to find the Prisoner Guilty (who was now upon her Tryal) since the afflicted Person *perceiving* the Witch to touch her, might *counterfeit* all those violent Motions, which, upon that Occasion, were observed in her: It was desired by the Judge, that some Eminent Gentlemen would attend this distempered Person, while she was in one of her Fits at the other End of the Hall, and bring one of the *Witches* to her. They did so, it seems, and the Maid being blinded, one *Amy Duny* was brought near, but another Person touched her, and the Touch had the same Effect as that of the *Witches* had before.

This is the Story, as Mr. *Bragge* himself has related it; and because I know he has a large Measure of Faith to bestow upon things of this Nature, I cannot in the least doubt but that he is fully perswaded, that this Maid was *bewitched*, and that she then laboured under some real Distemper of Body, when she was recovered by the Touch of this Woman. Give me leave therefore to Philosophize a little upon this Matter, and endeavour to give some Account of this extraordinary Accident.

And in order to this, I do here, in the first place, suppose, that this Maid finding her self in some strange Disorder, did really imagine her self to be *bewitched*, (whether she really was or not, it does not signify) and from the common Opinion that People had of this *Amy Duny*, and some other concurrent Circumstances, did likewise suppose her to be the Person that had *bewitched* her. This strong Perswasion of hers, could not possibly but raise in her the highest Hatred and Aversion to this Woman, and the utmost Eagerness and Impatience to revenge her self of her, whenever she came

came in her way. From this Heat of Passion, and immoderate Thirst after Revenge, there will naturally arise a violent Commotion and Exagitation of the Spirits; which cannot but cause very great Disturbances and Alterations in the *Animal Oeconomy*. By this the Blood, and other Humours, will receive a new Fermentation, and be raised up into violent Ebullitions, and irregular Motions; the solid Parts, which depend upon these, will be variously altered in the Tone, and Movement of them; in a word, the whole Frame of the Body will be discomposed and put out of Order, and Nature will exert it self after the most strange and uncommon Methods. Hence those distracted Looks, that Sparkling of the Eyes, and Tremblings of the Joints, which we observe in *Anger*; that Sprighlinefs of Countenance, those Antick Gestures, and Exultations, which we observe in *Excess of Joy*: Hence in short, all those different Faces which Nature puts on, in all the various Affections and Movements of the Soul.

From this Foundation, it will be no hard Matter to give some tolerable Account of the Case before us: For this Maid (as I before observed) being under such strong Perswasions, that she was *bewitch'd* by this *Amy Duny*, it is easy to conceive, that immediately upon this Touch which she received, *Nature* should, by the Methods just now mentioned, be rowzed up, and by a *sudden and violent* Plunge extricate her self out of those Difficulties under which she then laboured. Neither does it at all alter the Case, that it was not *Amy Duny*, but some other Woman, that then touched her; for (as it was there rightly observed) this Maid *might* be, and doubtless *was*, deceived in the Person; and imagine it to be the *Witch*, when it really was not. And it is the very same thing with relation to all the Effects and Consequences, whether it were she or any other that then touched her, provided the Maid did *fully believe*, and was *strongly perswaded*, that it was really she. Mr. Bragge may not perhaps like this Solution of mine; but

but I do assure him it is no more than what may be confirmed by many parallel Instances. We see sometimes Persons in an *Hysterick Fit*, *Apoplexy*, or *Lethargy*, suddenly brought to themselves again by *plucking of the Hair*, *Burning*, or *nipping of the Skin*, and such like Methods; nay, I have known many even *breathing out their last Gasps*, who have been revived again for *several Days*, only by a *shrill* and *sudden* screaming with the Voice. Now all these Methods, however various in themselves, do yet unanimously agree in the Cause and Manner by which they operate. All that they do is to give a quick and sudden Motion to the *Spirits*; and it is wonderful to think with what an uncommon Force Nature will struggle upon these Occasions; and how *easily* and *speedily* it will master the most violent and dangerous Disorders.

And now, I hope, we have in some Measure open'd the way to the Springs of this new Life, which *Anne Thorne* received at the Approach of *Jane Wenham*. The Cases are so exactly the same, that I take it for granted the Reader must have gone along with me in the Application of them to each other. She was now in a *violent Fit*, which I suppose either to be *Hysterical*, or something *like it*, and her Brain being in some Disorder, tho' not so as to render her wholly insensible of her Condition, she has a strong Perswasion in her self, that this *Jane Wenham* had bewitched her. No wonder then that upon the Approach of this Woman to her, her languid Spirits were immediately alarm'd, that she was rowzed and awakened out of her Fit, and that she *thirsted* with Impatience after her Blood, whom she supposed to be the Occasion of all her Miseries.

We will now therefore give Mr. Bragge Leave to suppose as many real Fits as he pleases, and doubt not but we shall be able to solve them from the same Principles. There is one thing alone, which may seem to be an Objection against what I have said; which is, *That Anne Thorne never recovered upon the Touch of any other Person,*
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although she could not tell whether it were the real Witch or no. But I do here very much wonder, how Mr. Bragge could say all this with such an Air of Assurance. The Experiment was never *made* but once that I can find, and that at P. 16. Here we are told, *That Anne Thorne was in a Fit*, and *that every one of those Women, which Jane Wenham had accused, were brought to her, to see if they could raise her out of her Fit.* Well, what did they do? Why, Mr. Bragge himself tells us, *that they touched her, and spoke to her.* And yet he tells us here, *That Anne Thorne never recovered at the Touch of any Person besides Jane Wenham, although she could not tell whether it were she or no.* But is it credible, that *Anne Thorne* should have been thus long conversant with *Jane Wenham*, and not know her by her *Voice*? Surely a Man must have neither *Care*, nor *Shame*, that can write at this rate! But let us proceed. After these Women had tried to recover *Anne Thorne*, and could do no good with her, we are told immediately, that *Jane Wenham* was brought to her *privately*, and that then *Anne Thorne* presently flew at her. But *how privately*, I would know, was all this done? Was it *so privately* that Mr. Bragge can be satisfied, that she had no Hint or Intimation of it? He talks so *coldly*, and so *sparingly* here, that I almost begin to suspect that he himself knows not how to affirm this. Well! but at P. 12. (which is the only Place besides, where we read of *Jane Wenham's* being brought to *Anne Thorne privately*) Mr. Bragge tells us something more, which is, that *her Eyes were closed*: But was it therefore impossible, that she should know any thing of *Jane Wenham's* coming to her? Is Mr. Bragge sure that she did not peep out a little under her Eye-lids? Lack-a-day, he does not consider how expert such young Wenches are at leering. But once more, I wou'd know, Were her Ears closed as fast as her Eyes? Was she not able to hear, because she could not see? Is Mr. Bragge assured, that amongst such a Throng of People that was generally about her, somebody or
other

other did not unluckily blab out, that *Jane Wenham* was a coming? I am very much afraid, that he can give no good Answer to all these Questions; but till he can, I must beg leave to be of Opinion, that *Anne Thorne* did some way or other smell out what they were a doing, and knew very well that was the Witch that touched her.

But if now after all this, the Devil must be concerned here, I see not yet what Ground they have from hence to charge Witchcraft upon *Jane Wenham*. A Witch, according to Mr. *Bragge's* own Notion, is one *who consents by any Part 2. P. 29. League or Contract to make Use of the Aid and Assistance of the Devil.* But now for my Life I cannot see, how it follows from this Maid's Recovery out of her Fits upon *Jane Wenham's* coming in, that there ever was such a Contract made between her and the Devil. If this Distemper depended upon the Devil's Power, may not the Devil suspend this Power, and take off the Distemper whensoever he pleases? Was it not as easy for him to do this upon any other Persons coming into the Room, as it was upon *Jane Wenham's*? Suppose then that it had come in the Devil's Head to have taken off this Charm, and released the Maid out of her Fit, exactly at the Time that Mr. *Bragge* came in, wou'd any one have been so mad as immediately to have concluded Mr. *Bragge* to have been a *Conjurer*? I dare say, Mr. *Bragge* will not like this Conclusion; but why then will he be so partial, as to call *Jane Wenham* a Witch, upon the very same Foundation upon which he wou'd think it very hard himself to be so thought of? Mr. *Bragge* will say perhaps, that this is not the same Case; for *Jane Wenham* is known to be a very wicked Woman; and besides, she is already under strong Suspicions of Witchcraft. Very right; but she is therefore, I think, the more proper Person for the Devil to play his Pranks upon. If he was concerned in the raising up *Anne Thorne* at the Touch or

Approach of *Fane Wenham*, it was doubtless with a Design to bring her under the Name and Scandal of a Witch; and perhaps to destroy her; but this he wou'd have found it a very hard Matter to have done, had she been a Person of an Establish'd Credit and Unfully'd Reputation. Besides, it is reasonable enough to think, that God wou'd not have permitted him to have brought so foul a Character upon any one that is truly Good and Virtuous; but I cannot say the same for those who are otherwise. *Fane Wenham* may, for any thing I know, deserve that Punishment which God has now laid upon her; and he may, for that Reason, have given her up wholly to the Devil's Mercy, to be dealt with just as he shall think fit to use her. So that after all this to do, about *Anne Thorne's* Recovery at the Approach of *Fane Wenham*, nothing more can be argued from hence (even supposing the Devil was concerned in it) than that he had an Intention of doing Mischief to them both. To the one, by afflicting her with Bodily Disease; and to the other by bringing her under a suspicion of being the Person who acts as his Instrument, and who is the occasion of all those Sufferings.

But if this will not do, here are it seems several other Marks and Characters, which are sufficient to fix Witchcraft upon *Fane Wenham*. The first of which is *Anne Thorn's* crying out upon her, in all her Intervals as the occasion of all her Torments. This Mr. Bragge seems to lay a mighty stress upon, whenever he has occasion to speak of it. But with all due submission, I take it to be a Plea so very weak, as nothing in Nature can be more. Pray is it not possible for a crack-brain'd Creature to believe her self bewitch'd when there is really nothing in it? And if it be possible to be thus mistaken in the thing it self, is it not likewise possible, nay is it not necessary that she should mistake in the Author of it? Or is it not possible, that one who has a design to play Tricks and set her Neighbours a staring, to feign her self bewitched, and then to make a huge Outcry upon any

Person

Person that serves best for her purpose ? All these things are very possible, and therefore till it be proved that *Anne Thorne* is really bewitched, her crying out against *Fane Wenham* will prove no more, than either that she thinks she has bewitched her, or has a mind that other Folks should think so. But neither, if this could be proved, do I see any great good it can do : For I can by no means think it necessary, that when any Person is bewitched, the Devil must needs inform him of the Instrument he has made use of. He might, as far as we can tell, take possession of *Anne Thorne* and yet leave her wholly in the Dark upon whose Errand he came ; and if so, I am not as yet, I must confess, so entirely satisfy'd with *Anne Thorne's* Infallibility, as to think she might not possibly mistake and charge the Witchcraft upon a wrong Body. In this Case, if *Fane Wenham* had been never so innocent, she would have been sure notwithstanding to have had all the Mischief laid at her Door ; for she having so long been suspected by all her Neighbours, *Anne Thorne* it is likely would have been ready enough to have concluded it was she, without giving her self the trouble of looking out any further. But after all, I see no absurdity in supposing here, that the Devil himself might be the Deceiver ; his Credit I think is not so very good, that what he says must always be depended upon. And therefore, he might perhaps put it into *Anne Thorne's* Head, that this Mother *Wenham* had bewitched her, when at the same time it might neither be she nor any other Person.

The Threatnings of *Fane Wenham* to *Anne Thorne*, do indeed seem to carry a much greater force along with them ; and were I assured, that *Fane Wenham* did threaten those very Disorders to *Anne Thorne* which fell upon her afterwards, it would have inclined me very strongly to conclude, that she is some such Person as Mr. *Bragge* pretends her to be : For this, if done for several times successively, would have been a convincing proof of her being conscious of her having receiv'd this Power

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from the Devil, and consequently an Argument of some League, Contract, or Assurance, made with, or received from him. But now to show the Reader with how little Judgment Mr. Bragge has apply'd this Consideration to the Case of *Fane Wenham*, I would desire him to observe these following Particulars.

1. That we have no sufficient Assurance from him, that *Anne Thorne* was ever threatned at all; and in this Point I am willing to allow Mr. Bragge more Latitude than he has allowed himself. He tells us P. 30. That one thing which fix'd this Witchcraft upon *Fane Wenham*, was her Threatning *Anne Thorne* after her first running for Sticks; he therefore puts the Issue of the whole Cause (I mean so far as the Threatnings of *Fane Wenham* are concerned) upon this one Threatning. But now I will here be so fair with him, as to take in all those Passages where the Threatnings of *Fane Wenham* are mention'd throughout this whole Narrative, and consider what grounds of Truth and Certainty are contained in them. Her saying to Mr. Gardiner, when she left his House, *That if she could not have Justice done there, she would have it somewhere else*, will not I suppose be consider'd as a Threatning. All that she can be thought to have intended by that is, *That since Mr. Gardiner had not in her Opinion allowed her a sufficient satisfaction, for the Indignities that had been offered to her by John Chapman, she would have recourse to some other Methods of doing her self Justice*. What these Methods were, she did not say, and for that reason no one can pretend to determine precisely what was her meaning; possibly she might think of going to Sir Henry Chauncy again, or to some other Justice of the Peace; or possibly she might intend to satisfy her self, by taking some private Revenge upon the Person who had injured her. But however this be, it is certain, that *Anne Thorne* cannot here be said to be threatned. One would be inclinable to think, that if any one was here threatned it was *John Chapman*, for he was the Person that she suppos'd had done her wrong, and he must therefore have suffer'd,

fer'd, if she had (what she called) *Justice done her*. The first Time therefore that it can be pretended that *Anne Thorne* was threatned is at *Page 5.* after she had been running for Sticks. Here we are informed, that *Jane Wenham* told *Anne Thorne*, that, if she told any more such Stories of her (meaning, that she had bewitched her) it should be worse for her than it had been yet. But now, here is not one Person besides *Anne Thorne* her self, that is pretended to have heard *Jane Wenham* say all this: *Anne Thorne* alone affirms it; *Jane Wenham* as confidently denies it: But here is not so much as a third Person to decide the Controversy, and tell us which of them is to be believed. We are told indeed, That whereas *Jane Wenham* said that she was at *Weston*, when *Anne Thorne* said she was threatned by her; *Thomas Ireland* made Oath, that he saw her in the Town of *Walkerne*, within three Minutes of that very time. This indeed (if true) proves *Jane Wenham* to be a Liar, but it does not prove her to be a Witch; for she might possibly be in Town at that time that she is here said to have threatned *Anne Thorne*, and yet never so much as have seen her. This Story then depending purely upon *Anne Thorne's* Evidence, is with me of no weight at all. The next and only Place besides, where there is mention made of any Threatning is at, *P. 30.* Where we are given to understand, That *Jane Wenham* told *William Burroughs* of *Walkerne*, who went to see her in Prison, That *Anne Thorne* should not be well; and that at the same time she also threatned *Anne Street*, saying, That she should be worse. But this was only attested to *Mr. Bragge*, and never sworn to before any Magistrate; neither has *Mr. Bragge* given us the least Knowledge of the Character of this *William Burroughs*, that we may be assured he ought to be believed in what he says. So that this whole Story of *Jane Wenham's* threatning *Anne Thorne*, although a thing of the utmost Importance, depends wholly upon the Evidence of *Anne Thorne* her self, and of *William Burroughs*, i. e. of No-body, and of Some-body, we know not who.

2. The next Thing that I would desire the Reader to take Notice of, is, That *Jane Wenham* is not so much as pretended ever to have threatned *Anne Thorne*, before she was actually seized with these Fits. Before her first running for Sticks, as I have proved, and as Mr. *Bragge* seems to grant, she was not once threatned; and we may observe the same Thing with relation to *Anne Street*; she was never threatned at all before, P. 30. And then Mr. *Bragge* himself confesses, that she had been in the like Condition with *Anne Thorne* for several Days before. Now to me this seems to be a very plain Proof, that *Jane Wenham* was not at all conscious to herself of any Power that she had, of bringing these Disorders upon these Persons; for if she had, it is very likely that she would have been as forward to have threatned them before as she was afterwards. Neither will it help Mr. *Bragge* to say, that she might forbear threatening these Persons before they were seized with these Distempers, on purpose that she might not be suspected; for this Argument bears full as strong against himself as it does against me; it being as good a Proof, that she ought not ever to have threatned them at all, as that she should not threaten them before these Disorders fell upon them. But it is no great Matter, whether we can from hence prove that *Jane Wenham* was not conscious to herself of any Power that she had over these Persons, provided it cannot be proved by this Argument that she was. And that it cannot, I think will appear very Evident, if we consider,

3. The Manner in which *Jane Wenham* expressed her self in these Threatnings. These, we may observe, are all of them made up of such General Terms, that any one alive might say the same thing, without being in any great Danger of being mistaken. The most that ever she said, was, That she should be worse; that she should not be well, and the like. Now these are such comprehensive Words, that they are equally applicable to any Kind of Disorder incident to Human Bodies: And therefore, she can be no more said (by saying these Words)

Words) to have threaten'd *Anne Thorne* with those very Symptoms which she afterwards labour'd under, than she can be said to have threaten'd her with the Stone, Gout, or any other Illness ; since whatsoever Disorder might fall upon her, it might with equal Propriety of Speech be said, *That she was not well*. Had she threaten'd any particular Disaster to *Anne Thorne*, where we could have distinguished her Meaning, such as being *Blind, Lame, Deaf, &c.* and it had happen'd ; this indeed would have been something. But for a Person to see another sick before her Eyes, and then to say no more of her, than *that she should not be well yet ; or, that she should be worse ;* this is such a Piece of *Black Art*, as most Old Women think themselves learn'd in. It is, perhaps, but an even Chance, whether a Person that is sick, shall be *well, better, or worse ;* and therefore whatever *Jane Wenham* had said of *Anne Thorne*, she would have had a very fair Throw to be in the right, especially if she had (as we may reasonably suppose she had) any tolerable Knowledge of the Nature of her Distemper. The *Threatnings* therefore of *Jane Wenham* to *Anne Thorne*, tho' never so true, will do Mr. Bragge no Service, in proving *Jane Wenham* to be a *Witch* ; because they are not such as are necessarily required in this Case ; *i. e.* They are such as cannot prove, that *Jane Wenham* was conscious to her self of any Power that she had of Causing those Disorders, which afterwards discover'd themselves in *Anne Thorne* ; which is the only thing that can give such *Threatnings* the Force of an Argument.

But all this, it seems, is not enough to clear *Jane Wenham* ; who (to convince all the World of the Justice of that Opinion which they had all along entertain'd of her) now confesses that she is a *Witch* ; and that she had a Hand in Bewitching *Anne Thorne*. And of this I am not willing to doubt, it being attested by so many Credible and Substantial P. 15, 16. Witnesses. But then, I am here very desirous to know
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what she meant by *being a Witch* ; and whether it be certain , that she used that Word *Witch*, in the same Sense in which Mr. Bragge all along understands it ? Doubtless she could not but be sensible, that she had for many Years past lived in a continual Course of Wick- edness ; That she had a very malicious and envious Mind ; That she had by this been often moved to wish People Harm , and that sometimes her Wishes had been accomplished. Possibly too she might be so weak as to imagine, that she had a real Power of pro- curing Mischief to those to whom she wished it. All these Things, I say, she might think of ; and this per- haps might be all the Notion that she had of *Witch- craft* : And if this be true, 'tis easy enough to under- stand how she should confess her self a Witch, and yet (at the same time) neither be, nor think her self to

P. 21. be really so. No , you'll say ; for she con- fesses she has a Familiar Spirit, and that she was *in Covenant with the Devil*. But what did she mean again, by *having a Familiar Spirit*, or *being in Covenant with the Devil* ? Did she explain her self upon these Terms ? Did she say that she had receiv'd any Tokens or Assurances from *Satan*, by which she knew that she was able to make use of his Assistance ? Pos- sibly she might understand no more by *having a Fami- liar Spirit*, or *being in Covenant with the Devil*, than she did by *being a Witch* ; *i. e.* that she was a very wicked and malicious Person, one who wished ill to her Neigh- bours, and had been for a long time conversant in those Practices which the Devil delights in , and of which he is said to be the Father : This, I say, is what she might call , and properly enough too, a *Familiarity with the Devil*.

It may be said here , perhaps , That *Jane Wen- ham's* confessing that this Spirit went about , and appeared to Anne Thorne in her Shape, argues something of Con- tract or Familiarity with it, in the strictest Sense ; and so indeed it would, did it appear that she had any

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Knowledge of this immediately from the Spirit it self. But to me this is not so evident: For *Jane Wenham* never spoke of any *Familiar* at all that she had, before it had been given in upon Oath, that *she was seen in the Town, and that she had threaten'd Anne Thorne*, at a time when she knew very well she was at another place. Now this might very well put the Woman to a stand. For, because she could not well disbelieve what had been sworn to, nor yet understand how it was possible she should threaten *Anne Thorne*, when at the same time she knew she had not so much as seen her; this, I say, might put her to a stand, and make her say (because she had no other way to solve the Difficulty) *that it was the Devil in her Shape*. And I dare say, that if any one should come and swear, that he saw Mr. *Bragge* at such a Time, and in such a Place, (when he knew that he was elsewhere) he would be very apt to make the same Answer, and cry, *It was the Devil, and not I*.

So that notwithstanding it be true, that *Jane Wenham* did literally confess her self to be a Witch; it is not so very plain, that she did own her self to be what Mr. *Bragge* meant by being so. But I shall not insist upon this Argument; but suppose, if you please, that her Confession was as full and as proper as you can desire: For even upon this Supposition, there will be Two Things, which will very much shake the Credit and Authority of this Confession.

The First is, The Circumstances which *Jane Wenham* was in, at the time of her Confession, which were such as I think were very likely to occasion her to speak things, tho' to her own Prejudice; which, at the same time, might not be really true. Mr. *Bragge* tells us, *Par. 2. p. 37. That her Confession was free and unrestrained, no Force having been used to bring her to it*. Now although I look upon this to be very true in the Sense wherein he speaks, yet I very much question whether it were absolutely, and in all respects, so free and unrestrained,

as could have been desired. I am very well satisfy'd, that Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Strutt, are both of them Men of too much Integrity, to attempt by any outward violence to make her confess any thing she was not really guilty of; but then I think, that the inward State and Condition of her own Mind at that time might lay a far greater force upon her than any outward violence whatsoever. The fear and surprize which she was then in were doubtless very considerable; for the whole Neighbourhood was now in an uproar against her, she was haled to a Magistrate in order to be sent to Prison, and for any thing she knew to the contrary to the Gallows. All this, I say, and many other frightful Circumstances besides, which People generally fall under upon such Occasions, might so far unsettle and distract her Mind, as to make her hardly her self, and prompt her to say she knew not what. Besides, Mr. Strutt had but just before been telling her, that *If she*
P. 15. *were guilty of any such thing, it would be the best thing she could do to confess it,* and in this he discharged himself as a faithful Guide; for so it certainly would be, as he added, *for the Salvation of her Soul, and the Good of others.* Now it is not very unlikely but that *Jane Wenham*, through Mistake, and want of Attention, might misapprehend him, and imagine his meaning might be, that her Confession would be an Argument with Sir *Henry Chauncy* to deal more favourably with her, perhaps to let her have her Liberty again, or at least to defer sending her to Gaol for some time. The latter of these is, I am well assured, more than a bare Supposition; for Mr. Strutt told me himself not long ago, that when he was endeavouring to bring *Jane Wenham* to a Confession, he did tell her, that he would prevail upon Sir *Henry Chauncy*, if he could, to defer putting the *Mittimus* in execution; now it is possible, I say, that she might upon these, and some such like Expectations be brought to confess what perhaps she was not guilty of. It is very certain that many Persons have
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been brought to confess by such Methods as these : and however innocent she might be, yet such were Peoples Prejudices against her, that she could not but foresee what a terrible Storm was drawing towards her, and that she must suffer what perhaps she thought as bad as Hanging before she could be released, and therefore might rather chuse to get off this way than by a Legal and Formal Tryal.

But if these Answers do not seem sufficient, there is yet a Second Supposition, which may perhaps a little help us in the present Case; and that is, that *Fane Wenham's* Discontents under her Condition in this Life, might make her willing to lay hold of this Opportunity of getting out of the World. I have heard Instances of some who have done so in this very Case, and I know not, but *Fane Wenham's* Circumstances might be such, as might with her be a sufficient Motive to make use of the same Methods. Methinks a poor Woman, that has lived for Sixteen Years under the Character of a Witch, and by this means was become so odious to all her Neighbours, as to be deny'd in all probability, the common Necessaries of Life. should have enough upon her to make her sick of the World, and desirous of being removed out of the reach of these Misfortunes; for my own part I should rather chuse to submit to a Thousand Deaths, than to bear all those Hardships which are the constant and necessary Attendants of such a Character. This Objection Mr. *Bragge* has taken notice of and allowed it to have its weight in some Cases; and I am still of opinion that it may have its weight in this, notwithstanding any thing he has said to the contrary. There being *strong Presumptions* here that this Charge was true, is nothing at all to Mr. *Par. 2.* *Bragge's* purpose, but makes the Argument still *P. 37.* stronger on my side. For the more firmly her Neighbours believed her to be a Witch, without doubt the worse they would use her, and consequently she must be so much the more willing to be released from her

her Misfortunes. I grant indeed, that a *Magistrate* who sits as a Judge upon such Matters, and who is to act according to the Evidence that he has of things, has greater reason to take the Confession of a Person when he has *strong Presumptions* against him than when he has none; and so has any one else too who only considers the matter in a private Capacity. And therefore I do not deny, but these *Presumptions* in this Case of *Jane Wenham* (if they be so strong as Mr. *Bragge* pretends) do amount to a collateral Evidence, and make the thing more probable. But still I think all this does not come up to a plain proof; for it must be granted, that there are oftentimes strong *Presumptions* where there is no real Guilt; and in such a Case I do not see why the innocent Person may not have much greater reason to make a Confession, upon the Motives whereof we are now speaking, than if the Suspensions against him were of less Weight and Importance. What reason I would fain know, could *Jane Wenham* have to confess her self a Witch; if the *Presumptions* against her were not so strong as to make the World believe her to be so?

We are now come to another Circumstance mentioned by Mr. *Bragge*, and which perhaps may be thought an Argument of *Jane Wenham's* being a Witch, and that is, *The great Difficulty of fetching Blood from her*. Of this we have Two Instances set down in this Narrative. The First is at P. 10. where we are told, that *Anne Thorne* scratched *Jane Wenham* upon the Forehead with such Eagernefs and Fury, that the Noise of her Nails seemed to all that were present, as if she were scratching against a Wainscot, and yet no Blood followed, although at the same time her Forehead was sadly torn and mangled by the Girl's Nails. But this Instance, as strange as it is, will upon due Examination I believe be found to have nothing at all in it but what is both Natural and Common. For after all these Lofty and Aggravating Expressions, wherewith Mr. *Bragge* has

has dressed up this Story, it may very reasonably be question'd whether *Anne Thorne* did any thing more by scratching *Jane Wenham* than barely raise up the *Cuticula* or *Scarf-skin*: and if this were all, it would not be in the least wonderful to me, that *Jane Wenham* should not bleed upon being thus *Scratched*. Nothing is more common than this; I my self have seen many, who, I will answer for them, were neither *Witches* nor *Wizzards*, scratched after such a manner, as perhaps Mr. *Bragge* wou'd call being *sadly torn and mangled*, without so much as one Drop of Blood following thereupon. The Reason of which I conceive to be this, that the Blood Vessels of that Part being so exceedingly fine and slender, it is possible they may be very much broken, and yet the Blood not issue forth in such a Quantity, as to be taken notice of. This Reason will carry still greater Force with it, if the Person scratched be supposed to be one that is old, weak, sickly, or under any Sort of Habit or Constitution of Body as is naturally attended with a Scarcity of Blood, and with a Weakness and Languidness of the Circulatory Motion. For in this Case, the whole Mass of Blood will be contained within the larger Vessels, and the extreme Capiliaries will be defrauded of that Share or Proportion which is natural to them; and consequently it must then be with greater Difficulties, that the Blood can be fetched out, upon scratching, or raising up the External Teguments of the Body. That this is the very Case of *Jane Wenham*, is too plain not to be taken notice of; and therefore it is, I think, no hard Matter upon this Reasoning, to see how it comes too pass, that *Jane Wenham* should be scratched without bleeding thereupon. I shall conclude this Story with acquainting the Reader with something which I heard from Mr. *Archer* of *Sandon*, a Person whose Credit Mr. *Bragge* often appeals to, viz. That he once or twice saw her after they had been scratching her, and that her Face and Linnen were all of a gore Blood.

Is not this then a shrewd Sign, that the Devil is not so very choice of *Jane Wenham's* Blood, but that it may be spent upon Occasion ; and that if it ever happened that she did not bleed upon being scratched, it was only because she was not scratched *enough* for that Purpose ?

But we are told, P. 19. That Mr. Chauncy ran a Pin into her Arm a great many times, and once up to the Head, leaving it in her Arm, that all the Company might see it. But this Account does by no means show, that *Jane Wenham* did not bleed as much as other Folks are wont to do upon the like Occasions. We are not assured that the Pin was run in deep enough to make her bleed, but once, and that is when it was run up to the Head ; and here we are told, that after the Pin was pulled out, there just appeared a little watery Serum. That little then perhaps may be enough to serve our turn ; for I hope neither Mr. Chauncy, nor Mr. Bragge, could expect that *Jane Wenham* should have bled at the same rate, upon being pricked with a Pin, that she would have done upon being stuck with a Penknife or Lancet. But this it seems was not what *might be called* Blood ; but for what Reason it might not, I cannot imagine. All we are told to show that is, that it was *thin* and *watery*, i. e. I suppose it was not altogether so thick as Cream, or hasty Pudding. Mr. Chauncy, it is like, expected that *Jane Wenham's* Blood shou'd have been as rich and as florid as that of *Anne Thorne's*, or of any other Virgin of about 16. He makes no Difference, I see, between the Beef and Mutton Regimen, and that of Turnips and Water-gruel. If this be a good Test of *Witchcraft*, we may hang up (as far as I know) all the poor old Women in the Kingdom ; for if they were all to be pricked at this rate, we might chance to find their Blood of the same Colour, and Consistency.

But admitting now, that *Jane Wenham* did not Bleed as much as is usual upon these Occasions, or even not at all, there is one Consideration which I think will afford

ford a sufficient Answer to any Argument that can possibly be drawn from this Topick ; and that is, the *Dread* and *Consternation* that the poor Wretch was in upon these Occasions. But just before she was scratched, the Constables had been breaking open her Doors upon her ; and having seized her, dragged her by main Force (as may reasonably be supposed) to Mr. *Gardiner's* House. In the other Instance Mr. *Chauncy* snatches a Pin out of her Hand, flies at her, and runs it six or seven Times into her Arm. Such Usage as this was enough to frighten a poor Old Woman out of her Wits, and to congeal and stagnate those naturally cold and sluggish Humours which she had within her. *Fear*, by a natural Law within ourselves, which we can sooner experience than explain, weakens and unbends the *Animal Powers*. The Heart languishes ; the Fibres lose their proper Tone and Elasticity ; and the Blood, through want of a sufficient Force to drive it forward, grows languid and slow in its circulatory Motion. Hence it is that (as Physicians inform us) the most violent *Hemorrhages* are oft-times stopped by a sudden and vehement Fright ; because the Moment or Force by which the Blood presses against the Sides of the Vessels, being by this means diminished, the Lips of the broken Orifice are easily cemented again to one another. And if this may be effected in the larger Branches of the Vessels where the Stream of the Blood is more rapid and impetuous, how much rather in the extream Capillaries, where the Force of the Blood is naturally very small ; and may therefore very easily be lost upon the least decay or failure in the Bloods Motion.

But the Story of *Fane Wenham's* not being able to say *the Lord's Prayer*, is what surprizes me most ; not that *Fane Wenham* could not repeat it, but that any one should be so very whimsical, as to bring it as an Argument for the Proof of this *Witchcraft*. Strange and wonderful indeed, that a poor

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wicked old Wretch, that has not said her Prayers these 20 Years, and perhaps was never able to say them in her whole Life, should blunder for the three or four first Times she was called to it ! And not only so, but when she was under such Circumstances too as had been enough to have confounded her, had she been able to have said them never so perfectly. For my own Part, I will not pretend to say I could have said them better, if I knew my Life were at stake, and depended upon that Test. Mr. *Bragge* may call me Wizzard for this if he thinks fit ; but I will venture to affirm further, that some, even of those *Wise Heads* who gave Verdict against her, would have been as much puzzled as she, had they been called to do it in open Court ; nay, I know not whether Mr. *Bragge* himself would have come off better. But how good an Argument soever this may have been in its time, it is now quite done, and good for nothing ; for Use and Experience has, it seems, rubbed up her Memory ; and, as I am credibly informed by those who have been with her, she is now, and has been for some time, as able to say the Lord's Prayer as Mr. *Bragge*, or any one else.

I have by this time gone through, I think, every Thing that is material in the History of *Anne Thorne* : As for that of *Anne Street*, I shall not trouble my self about it, it being by far less considerable, and consequently answered with far less difficulty. It is by no means strange to me, that *Anne Thorne* having acted her Part with so much success, others should by degrees be drawn into the Plot ; or that the Rumor of her being bewitched having made such a Disturbance in the Neighbourhood, others should begin to fancy themselves in the same ill handling. I shall therefore now only crave the Reader's Patience, whilst I Answer an Objection or two, which, I foresee, may be raised against these Remarks in general.

1. It may be urged, that I have here supposed *Anne Thorne* to labour under some *natural* Distemper, in opposition to the Opinion of all those who were about her, and declared their Belief of the Contrary. This Objection, I must own, lies full against me ; I did say her Distemper was something Natural, and am still of that Opinion ; and if I am mistaken, I must thank Mr. Bragge for it. I have no other Knowledge of *Anne Thorne's* Illness, than what Mr. Bragge has been pleased to give me ; and if I have not consider'd such things as I have no Knowledge of, I am not to be blamed : But I will venture to affirm, that there is not so much as *one Symptom* in his whole Book, which may not be Natural ; and if not directly *Hysterical*, yet something very nearly related to it. What are *Convulsions of the Body, Paleness of the Face, Lowness and Deadness of Pulse, a disorderly and irregular Imagination, &c.* but Symptoms common enough in these Cases ? And as to those of *running and leaping* at those unusual rates, if they are not of that Tribe, I hope I have at least shown them to be such as may fairly be resolved into Natural Causes. Mr. Bragge tells us indeed, *that a very ingenious Gentleman, and able Physician, saw her in one of her Fits, which too was the least that ever she had ; and gave his Opinion of it as a Physician, that it was no natural Distemper.* But this Declaration of his, does not with me avail any thing at all. For I would very fain know what the Doctor could mean, by saying *that it was no Natural Distemper.* Did he mean *that it was such a Distemper as he had never observed before, or never had been observed by any one besides in ordinary Practice ?* Or did he mean *that it was such a Distemper as was absolutely beyond the Power of Natural Causes to produce ?* If this latter were his meaning (as it must be, to do Mr. Bragge any service) I should desire no stronger Proof to show that his Judgment is not to be depended on. For I do here challenge and defy the best Physician upon Earth,

Discovery,
P. 31.

provided he considers of what he says, to affirm any such Thing of any Distemper. It is a *Negative Proposition*, and what therefore can never be plainly proved, unless its *Positive* can be brought to a flat Contradiction: And if the Doctor can do this, I will freely give up the whole Cause, and comply with every thing Mr. Bragge would have me. But this, I dare believe, is what he will not pretend to; if he does, he pretends to more than ever any one pretended to yet, or can reasonably pretend to, upon that short and imperfect Knowledge we have of our own selves. Shall we, who know not so much as by what Force or Power the *Heart* and *Pulse* beat, who understand not by what means the most regular and simple Operations are produced in us; pretend to fathom the more *abstruse* and *hidden* Mysteries of Nature, and to define the utmost Extent of her Power in all her most *secret* and *complicated* Motions? This would be full as extravagant an Attempt, as to pretend to set Bounds to the Sea, by saying, *Hither shalt thou go, and no further*: It supposes such a compleat and perfect Knowledge of the *Oeconomy* of our Bodies, as no Man ever yet had, or ever can have, and which alone belongs to that Infinitely Wise Being, by whose Understanding we were framed, and who is the Spring and Fountain of all Life and Motion in us. Every Distemper incident to Humane Body, is a Mystery far beyond the reach of our weak Reasoning to comprehend; they all depend upon Causes wholly unknown to us; and therefore unless Experience had been our Guide and Instructor, we could no more have said of the most common and ordinary Disease, that it *could*, or *could not* be, than we could have pretended to have fixed Bounds to infinite Wisdom and infinite Power.

This, I make no question, but the Doctor is very sensible of; and therefore I am very inclinable to believe, that he meant no more by saying *Anne Thorne's*
Distem-

Distemper was not Natural; than That it was such a Distemper as he had not before observed in his ordinary Practice. But then I think Mr. Bragge is very much out in his Way of Reasoning; viz. in making use of this Declaration of the Doctor's, in favour of his pretended Witchcraft. For does it follow, that because this Distemper is *new and uncommon*, that therefore it must be something *above the Power of Natural Causes*? Is *Nature* always ty'd down to the same uniform way of acting; and is it not possible to make any Variations in the Use and Exercise of her several Faculties? He who can agree to all this, must know but little of himself, or of any thing besides; the contrary of this being so true, that there is hardly any two Subjects upon which the same Distemper will show it self exactly alike in all its Circumstances. And indeed, it is wonderful to me, that considering the Differences of *Age, Sex, Constitution*, and many other Causes besides, which concur to the Production of *Diseases* in us, that *Nature* should not be far more inconstant and irregular in her *Operations*, and that every Day should not discover some new and uncommon Disaster. Every *Disease* has had its Beginning; and there was a time, when those which every Old Woman now thinks her self skill'd in, were as wonderful (perhaps) as any one Part of *Anne Thorne's* Illness. And if the Brains of former Ages had been cast in the same Mould with Mr. Bragge's, I tremble to think what a Rout there would have been, and how many Histories and Trials of Witches would daily have been publish'd.

The next Objection which (it is likely) may be urged against me, is, *That I have in these Papers charged Anne Thorne with some Design of Cheat and Imposture*; which, perhaps, may not seem so consistent with the Character Mr. Bragge has given of her, with her *Simplicity*, and *small Knowledge* of the World, nor with any *Motives* upon which she can be thought to have had
any

any such Design ; there being no visible *Pleasure* or *Profit*, which might induce her to it. In Answer to which, I beg leave to observe,

1. That as to her *Character*, whatever it might have been formerly, it will now be of little Service to her, in securing her from the Imputation of any Ill Designs, which may be charged upon her. Mrs. Gardiner, who at that time seem'd so fully persuaded of her Innocency, and who all along spoke so favourably of her, has by this time so much Reason to alter her Opinion, that I dare believe, she will not now say any thing in her Defence. Her *Fidelity*, which is the only Virtue which is able to support and give Credit to the greatest Part of these Relations, is now entirely lost, and she is at last found to be so *arrant a Lyar*, that there is no manner of heed to be given to any thing that she says. I do not by this mean, that she is a *known* and *common* Lyar ; that, I must confess, is more than I can affirm : But thus much I can say, and that upon the Credit of one whom I can rely upon, and who heard it from Mrs. Gardiner's own Mouth ; That she has (since these Accidents have happen'd) caught her in so many gross and palpable Lies, that she has now entirely laid aside that good Opinion that she once entertained of her. This is enough with me to blast her whole *Character*, and to invalidate the Credibility of every thing that depends upon her Testimony. For altho' it does not necessarily follow, that a Person has always been a Lyar, because he is now one ; yet it has *been* a Piece of Justice always paid to such sort of People, *never to be believed*. And I think, how unjust soever it may be thought, barely from *their* affirming a thing, to conclude it to be *false*, we have yet all the Reason in the World to be excused, if we cannot upon their sole Authority conclude it to be true.

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2. As to her *Knowledge*, and *Experience in the World*, there is little to be said about it on either side. If I have too high a Notion of them, Mr. *Bragge* may (on the other hand) have one as much too low. The Policy of such Girls as *these*, is not always open to every one's View: They have sometimes Designs too deep to be presently discover'd; and are able to manage such dark Intrigues, as one would hardly suspect in them. But as to this in particular, I do not see such mighty Difficulties in it; but that a *firm Resolution*, join'd with a *moderate Share of Cunning*, might be able to carry her thro' it: And if what she had was any ways deficient, we know there is one abroad in the World, who is forward enough to encourage People in ill Designs, and who could spare her some of his Policy, to make up those Defects in her own.

3. As to the *Ends* that she might propose to herself in such Attempts as these, whatever they are, we may be sure she would conceal them as much as possible. It is a *main Part* an *Impostor* has to play, to be private in these; and we daily see in other Cases, that Designs are carried on with the best Success, by those who seem to have none. I cannot pretend to say, what *Pleasure* or *Profit* she could expect from an *Imposture* of this Kind; but I do not think we have Reason enough to conclude from thence, that she expected none. Such Persons as those do not always act upon Rational Motives; and if they did, they may possibly have some Designs, which no body is able to fathom but themselves. In short, it is the most uncertain way in the World, to argue from People's Designs; because the Ends which Men propose to themselves, are so infinitely various and uncertain. And therefore it is not a Rational Inference, to say of any one, *That he did not do this or that*, because we can see no Reason *why* he should do it.

*Hist. Reign of
K. James I.
A. D. 1617.*

Our *English* History has furnished us with a very Remarkable Instance, what wonderful Impostures may sometimes be carried on, by the most unexperienc'd and (seemingly) the most undesigning People. I mean the Story of the Boy of *Bilston*; who, by those strange and uncommon Disorders which were observ'd upon him, was generally thought to have been possess'd by some Evil Spirit. He was, in all Probability, as little suspected to have had any Design as *Anne Thorne*; and yet it plainly appear'd in the End, that he was a most wicked and impudent Cheat, set on and encourag'd by some crafty Jesuits, in order to support the Power and Authority of the *Romish* Priesthood.

And if Mr. *Bragge* could have had the Patience to have waited a while, Time (perhaps) would have brought to Light even these hidden Mysteries. It is, I think, now evident beyond Dispute, that *Anne Thorne* is not so silly and undesigning a Girl, as he would make us believe. If she has got nothing else by playing these Pranks, she has got what she calls a good Husband; but it is possible it may hereafter appear, that she got something more. I cannot say this was what she expected; but it fell out so very luckily, that methinks it would be some Excuse, if one should suppose something of this Nature to have been intended. There was a certain Cunning Fellow apply'd to in this Case, under the Name of a *White Witch*; who, by his Prescriptions, has given us pretty broad Hints, what he took this Wench's Case to be. She was, it seems, to wash her Hands and Face twice a Day, with a particular Kind of Water which he sent her. What the present Effects of it would be, the Doctor did not say; but (it seems) they were of so odd a Nature, that she was neither to be trusted alone, nor with much Company. One brisk Fellow only was permitted to attend her in a private Room, for one, two, or three Hours, according as there should be

be occasion. This Method if carefully observ'd; the Doctor affirmed *upon the Word of a Physician*, would in a very short time procure her a *Husband*. The Girls Spirits were so much elevated at the Thoughts of this, that as Mr. Bragge has very well observ'd, *She was not afterwards very easily frightned, but P. 32. whenever she had a lucid Interval from her Pains, was observed to be very chearful and pleasant, and pleased her self with the hopes that e'er long she should be well.* Whether or no the Doctor's Rules were carefully observed I shall leave the Reader to guess ; it is certain, that besides the Sollicitations of Nature she had a careful Mother almost continually at her Elbow, who would be ever and anon crying *Nan, have you washed your Face and Hands to Day?* And it is certain, that she has reaped all the Benefit that could have been hoped for from the most strict and regular use of this Medicine. The Man who attended her by the Doctor's Order is now become her Husband, which had so good an effect upon her, that notwithstanding all her former illness, she was able within a Day or Two to follow her Bridegroom into *Wales*, (as some say) or some other place a great way off, it is not well known where.

The same good Fate has likewise attended *Anne Street* ; (whether she borrowed a little of *Anne Thorne's Water* to wash her Face and Hands with, I do not hear, but) she is also Married, much to the ease both of Body and Mind. The evil Spirit has it seems now forsaken her, and given her up wholly to the possession of her new Master. How it fares with *Anne Thorne* I have not yet been inform'd, but I suppose she is much in the same condition that other young Wenches are generally in, about a Month or two after *Matrimony*.

And now, I hope, I have sufficiently discharged myself in the Examination of Mr. Bragge's Narrative. It is I think very evident from what has been said. 1st. That there are a great many of the Facts themselves which are not

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clearly proved. 2^{dly}, That supposing they were all true and certain in themselves, there is yet no sufficient proof, that they were effected by preternatural Causes. 3^{dly}, That supposing they were effected by preternatural Causes, there is yet no sufficient Foundation in them to support this Charge of Witchcraft against *Jane Wenham*. From whence it follows, that the whole Story is either groundless, false, or frivolous, or else, that Mr. *Bragge* has given us but a very lame and imperfect Relation of it. And therefore I hope, that after all those large Pretensions of his, to *Fairness* and *Impartiality*, he will acknowledge that it now lies upon him, either to give up that Cause, which he has been all long defending with so much Zeal and Assurance, or else to begin again and endeavour to justify himself by a more compleat and perfect Narrative. It is very likely, that Mr. *Bragge* may not be so forward to acknowledge any neglect in himself, as to charge these Deficiencies upon the Matters themselves, which perhaps he will tell us are not capable of being more clearly handled. If this should chance to be his Notion, I

know already what Answer I am likely to have, See his *viz.* That I am one of those unreasonable Pref. Men, who require an Evidence greater than the

thing in dispute will admit of. But for this I will appeal to all the World. I leave any one to judge, who has consider'd the whole Argument on both sides, whether the Proofs which Mr. *Bragge* has given us do come up to this Standard; *i. e.* whether or no we have all that Evidence that could possibly be given, supposing the things now in Debate were certainly true; I will leave this, I say, to any ones Judgment, not because I have no Arguments to prove the contrary, but because I think it needs none; however, if Mr. *Bragge* should be so unreasonable, as to put me upon the Proof of this, I think my self able to give him a *Demonstration* of it in every Story throughout the whole Narrative.

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But I do not see how it will help Mr. *Bragge*, if as he pretends, he has given us all the Proofs for his Witchcraft, that the Nature of the thing will admit of. It would indeed then be very unreasonable in any Man to expect that he should give more ; but then it would be full as unreasonable in him to expect, that any one should believe it barely for that Reason. For wherever the Thing in Question does not admit of Evidence to weigh with a reasonable Man, there the Nature of the Thing is such, that (be it never so true) it cannot be the Object of a wise Man's Faith. For our belief of any thing does not depend upon the intrinsic Certainty and Reality of the Thing it self, but upon the Evidence it carries with it, with relation to us who are to be the Judges of it. And therefore since it is certain a thing may be true, and yet not capable of being proved to be so, it will be to little purpose to say, that we have all the Evidence that the thing will bear, if all be not enough.

I would not however be so understood, as if I affirm'd that the *Devil* has not any way been concerned in bringing these Disorders upon *Anne Thorne*, Should I assert this, I should think my self full as unreasonable on this side as Mr. *Bragge* has been on the other ? It was a current Opinion amongst the *Ancients*, that *most*, if not *all* Diseases were occasioned by *Evil Spirits* acting upon Human Bodies ; and I must own, that I do not see any such Absurdity in this Notion, as to venture, positively to affirm the contrary. But this (although true) would be nothing at all to our purpose ; for the Question is, not *whether or no this Distemper of Anne Thorn's was occasioned by the power of the Devil*, but *whether or no it appears to have been so, upon those Proofs which Mr. Bragge has given us*. This, I say, is the thing to be consider'd ; and this is all that I pretend to deny. I say the same thing with relation to *Jane Wenham's* being employed by the *Devil* as his Instrument in all this Mischief. I

do not deny but that she may possibly be a *Witch*, and that she may possibly have bewitched *Anne Thorne* ; and if Mr. *Bragge*, or any one else can give me good proof of that, I will believe it. But I do not think my self under any manner of obligation to do so, upon those Arguments which have hitherto been urged to this purpose

I am therefore willing to hope, that these *Papers* may in some measure justify Mr. Justice *Powell* in that dissatisfaction he discovered at the *Verdict* that was brought in against this unhappy Woman, and that Mr. *See Intr.* *Bragge* will ask pardon of that Worthy and *ad Par.* Eminent Man, for that Charge of *Incredulity* 2. which he has with so little Modesty laid upon him. The Reader cannot but observe, with how little deference he speaks of him, whensoever he has occasion to mention his Name ; and how angry he is that he was not as forward to believe all those *Idle Stories* concerning this pretended Witchcraft, as he himself, or the rest of those who related them ; and I doubt not but he will be able from hence to form a true Notion of the *Character* of the Man, when one of so considerable a Station, and of so great Worth, could not escape his *insolent Reflections*.

But I do not wonder at his rude treatment of Mr. Justice *Powell*, when he has not spared even the Holy *Oracles* themselves. Observe with what an Air he magnifies and extolls the Power of his supposed *See his* Sorcerers. *Pref.* When, says he, we saw a poor Cripple not only arise and walk but run with a prodigious swiftness, when we heard her complain grievously and with tears, of the excessive Torments she was under upon the threatnings of a wicked Neighbour, &c. we thought it high time to bestir our selves. I could hardly have thought, had I not seen it with my Eyes, that any one who pretends to Religion, should be able to write at such a rate as this. Had he no more than barely said, that

that *Anne Thorne* was recovered *perfectly* from her Lameness by the *Witchcraft* of this Woman, this tho' false would yet have been something pardonable. But not only to assert *this* and *more*, but also to assert it in *Scripture-Terms*, and thereby to draw his *Lying Wonders* into a Parallel with, nay, to give them the Preference to, the *Miracles* of our *Blessed Lord himself*; This is such an insolent Piece of *Profaneness*, as he deserves to be chastised for, rather with a *Rod*, than with *Reasoning*.

I cannot conclude these Papers, without adding a Word or two in behalf of those two Gentlemen of the *Clergy*, who came in as Evidences against this *Jane Wenham*. It has been pretended by a late *Author*, who wrote against this *Witchcraft*, as if they were a couple of crafty and designing Men, who were willing to impose upon the World, and make a show of Wonders, to support and magnify the Dignity of their *Profession*. I am confident that this Charge has done them no discredit amongst those who know them; but I cannot say how ready some may have been from hence, to entertain an ill Opinion of them; and therefore I take this Opportunity of endeavouring to clear them from so foul an Aspersion, and of letting the World know that they are quite another Sort of Men. If the Reader will trust my *Integrity*, he cannot reasonably question my *Authority*; for I am personally acquainted with them both, and know them to be Persons who make a *Conscience* of attesting such Things as they know to be false, much more of attempting to take away the Life of any whom they think do not justly deserve it. How far indeed they themselves have been imposed upon, I do not say; possibly they may have been somewhat too forward in giving their Assent to the Truth of some Stories, and too hasty in the *Conclusions* which they have drawn from them. But even in this I think they may be excused; for the *Occurrences* were so seemingly
 strange,

strange, and they so nearly concerned in them, that I know not whether Wiser Men than they, had they been in their Places, would have discharged themselves better. It is one Thing to consider of these Matters *calmly* and *at a distance*, and another to have them *before our Eyes*, and to think of them in the midst of that hurry and surprize, which are the necessary Attendants of Things of that Nature; and therefore I hope the World will not refuse to give them the same favourable Allowances which are in Justice due to all Mankind.

And now having said all that I think to be necessary, it is time to dismiss my Reader, and to thank him for the Patience he has allowed me. It is very likely that Mr. Bragge's unsatiable Itch after Scribling, joyned with

* See *Introd.*
to the 2d Part,
§. I.

some other Prospect, may put him upon giving a Reply. If those * *important Subjects* which he says he is now *engaged in by Duty and Inclination*, should permit him to

divert his Pen once more this way, he will either give a solid Answer to what I have offered, or he will not. If the former, I shall have nothing more to say; for as I professed at my Entrance upon this Subject, *that I was ready to give up freely, upon just and reasonable Grounds of Conviction*; so I declare my self now to be of the same Mind; and that I am neither so much at Leisure, nor so great a Stranger to *Modesty* and *Good Breeding*, as to hold up a Dispute merely for its own sake. But if the Latter, I shall then have less Reason to trouble my Head any farther with him, since these Papers will then lose nothing of their Force, and will therefore be able at any time to speak for themselves.

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